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MORAL PHILOSOPHY:

EXTRACTS FROM

JOUFFROY,

TRANSLATED BY

ROBERT N. TOPPAN.

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PREFACE.

The following translation contains three extracts from the philosophical writings of Jouffroy, one of the most profound of the French philosophers of the nineteenth century, and a pupil of the celebrated Cousin.

The first extract, the "Problem of Human Destiny," is taken from the "Mélanges Philosophiques."

The second extract, treating of the "Moral Facts of Human Nature," has been previously translated by the Rev. William H. Channing.

The third extract, contains Jouffroy's "Theoretical Views" of Morality.

The three extracts taken together, form a complete whole. The first lays down the problem of human destiny, and shows that the problem can only be solved philosophi-

cally by a study of the facts of human nature. The second gives a description of the moral facts of human nature. The moral facts of human nature being ascertained, the third extract gives us the moral law that we ought to obey, in order to accomplish as fully as possible our destiny in this world.

Although knowing that the translation is not what it might be, and that it contains many imperfections, the translator still hopes that it may give to the students of philosophy in this country some knowledge of a writer so little known to us and yet so deserving of our attention.

ROBERT N. TOPPAN.

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MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

LECTURE I.

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN DESTINY.

The spectacle of the universe which surrounds us, and of the different beings which people it, create in all men certain beliefs, which arise, as it were, spontaneously, and which cannot be rejected when once created. As all beings which fill the world have a fixed nature, it seems to us certain that this nature imposes a particular destiny upon each one of them, and as the world is itself harmonious, we believe that the particular destiny of each of these beings tends toward the destiny of the whole, and forms an element of universal order. Every being then appears to us to be consecrated by its organization to a certain end. The accomplishment of this end is the part of each creature in this world, and from the combination of all these parts results the drama of the creation. What is the end of any given being? We may be ignorant of it; but

whether we know it or not, we still believe that the being has an end, and that it is connected with the general harmony of the whole. As in a large machine, composed of a thousand wheels, we know that each wheel accomplishes a certain movement, and we believe that this movement contributes to the movement of the whole machine, so in this vast universe, peopled by so many different beings, we believe not only that each of these beings acts according to its nature, but also that its action is connected with the action of the whole. There is nothing in the creation which we cannot subject to this law. We impose it not only on man, animals and plants, but even on those objects which we call inanimate, but which in truth do not deserve that name. The pebble which lies under my feet, has not been created in vain any more than I have ; its nature assigns it a part in the creation, and if its part is obscure, if it is less beautiful, less grand than mine, it is not accomplished the less, and does not the less tend toward the end established by the Creator when the world came freshly created from his hands.

Whence comes this belief? This is not the proper place to make the inquiry ; but from whatever source it emanates, and in whatever way it causes itself to be received, the belief is always such as cannot be overcome. When we attempt to call in

doubt the twofold principle which I have just stated, we cannot do it. It stands firm in spite of all our efforts to eradicate it. Skepticism can well call in question the absolute truth of this principle; it can affirm that if human intelligence had been made differently, this principle, which seems to us necessary, could seem to us absurd; but *this* skepticism cannot do—it cannot destroy or weaken the authority of the principle. The skeptics themselves, in the practical business of life, yield to the influence of the principle; they believe and reason like the rest of mankind, and like the rest of men they attribute a particular destiny to each thing and search for it. Skepticism commits a great error: the question in philosophy is, not to know what truth would be if human understanding were differently made from what it is; the question is to know what truth is for human understanding. To claim a higher truth is to claim what is impossible; for the understanding cannot cease being what it is, in order to decide what truth would be after this transformation. There is no other truth for man than human truth; it is the only truth given him to attain.

All beings have, then, their particular ends, which are imposed upon them by their nature, and because imposed upon them by their nature, they tend toward these ends with energy. This is

what all beings have in common; but the largest portion, while accomplishing their destiny, are ignorant of it, and it is only given to a very small number to know that they have a destiny. This high privilege has been reserved to reasonable natures, and the only being endowed with reason that we know of is man.

If you consider a mineral, you will perceive that it has two elements—the aggregate particles and the force which holds them together. The force is the constituent element, for it is that which causes the aggregation, and the mineral is that aggregation. We here see a principle which, by virtue of its nature, accomplishes a certain mission, which is its end. But this principle being without sensibility, and without intelligence, the end is accomplished without its perceiving it or knowing it. When its part is performed without hindrance, it does not rejoice; when it meets with obstacles or is overcome by an external force, it does not suffer: and not only does it neither rejoice nor suffer in these two cases, because it is insensible; but also because it is unintelligent, it does not even know that in the one case it accomplishes its destiny, and that in the other it is prevented from accomplishing its destiny; it does not know that it has a destiny, still less what that destiny is. It is a blind actor, which plays its part without knowing it,

without wishing it, and without knowing that it has a part, and that it fulfills it.

In the plant the force has a more varied, richer, and stronger development. Its part is not limited to holding a certain number of material particles in an immovable aggregation. It takes possession of the bud, and calling to its aid all the friendly elements which nature has placed within its reach, like a skillful workman, it builds up and organizes a being which covers itself with leaves and fruits, which lives from its life and which distributes to the winds and the earth, to the waves and to nature, the seeds containing the germs of new beings resembling itself. Such is the more noble destiny of the plant, or of the principle which constitutes it. But the plant does all this also unconsciously: it is never anxious about its own destiny, because it is unintelligent. Does it, however, feel the axe that strikes it, the wind that breaks off its branches, the burning sun that dries up its roots? We do not know. Some facts would seem to show a sort of dull sensibility in plants, which causes a slight tremulous motion when wounded in their most delicate organs; but these indications prove nothing, and we ought rather to doubt them than be willing to attribute our life to all things, and to place the immense variety of created beings under the unity of the laws of our nature. In the animal,

doubt is no longer permitted; the principle which constitutes the animal is no longer a force foreign to itself and its acts, which by the combination of certain operations executed without being felt, without being known, and without being willed, accomplishes mechanically the end assigned it in the creation. From the fact alone that the animal principle exists and exists in a certain way, like every other possible principle it is developed and aspires to its end; but because it is sensible, it has a perception of these instinctive tendencies; it feels them, they are desires; and because they are felt, it rejoices when they are satisfied: when they are impeded it suffers. This is not all; it has received from God an intelligence sufficient to recognize the object of its desires, and sufficient self-command to place voluntarily all its power at the service of its desires. The animal does not remain, then, like the plant, a stranger to what takes place within itself; by virtue of this threefold faculty which it has, it is given to the animal to participate in the accomplishment of its own destiny. But it is not given to the animal to comprehend that it has a destiny, nor what that destiny is; there is wanting for this purpose that superior degree of intelligence called *reason*, without which the understanding is reduced to a mere knowing without comprehending, and to serving

as a slave in place of commanding as a master. In yielding to its desires, in discovering that which is proper for them, in endeavoring to satisfy these desires, the animal does not know what it is doing—it does not know that it is accomplishing its destiny; still less does it comprehend that in accomplishing this destiny it plays a part in the universe. The idea of a destiny never presents itself to the animal; the animal never proposes to itself for solution the problem of knowing what its destiny, and the destiny of the world, is. The noble but sad privilege of these lofty thoughts has been refused it; its nature is incapable of it.

It is entirely different with man. Man is also, by his constitution, predestined to a certain end. This destiny becomes apparent in him in the first place, as in animals, by wants, desires, and instinctive movements. Like them, he has a kind of intelligence which serves to recognize the existence of these desires and wants, as well as the objects which can satisfy them. He possesses also, like them, that sensibility which causes every created being to suffer when the propensities of its nature are thwarted, and to rejoice when they are gratified. Like them, also, he possesses the power of self-command, which permits him to employ voluntarily his energy in the pursuit of those objects which his wants, his propensities and his

intelligence point out. But the faculties which Heaven has bestowed on man are not limited to this. He has received, besides, that higher understanding called reason, through which he comprehends himself and those things which surround him, and the relations which exist between their nature and his. Man has not only the power to perceive and know those things which are good or bad for him, but he has also the faculty of comprehending in what way and how these things have for him different qualities; how it is that all things are not equally indifferent to him, and how there exists and can exist good and evil for himself and all beings. In a word, man, in accomplishing the destiny imposed upon him by his nature, has the power of comprehending that he has a destiny, that everything, and even the creation, has its destiny, and that the destiny of each created being is only a fragment of that of the whole creation. If we review what we have just said, you will see, gentlemen, that it is sufficient for a thing to exist, and exist in a certain way, in order to be destined to a certain development. This development is the same thing as the destiny of the being—a destiny resulting from its nature. The nature of beings without sensibility and intelligence is developed and tends toward its end without their perceiving or knowing it. The destiny of beings purely sen-

sitive, if such exist, is accomplished like others, but when it is easily accomplished they rejoice, when it is accomplished with difficulty they suffer. The destiny of beings endowed with intelligence, but devoid of reason is also accomplished, but accomplished with this difference, that the intelligence and the will assist as instruments. A new phenomenon appears, however, in reasonable creatures: they not only rejoice or suffer according as their destiny is accomplished with ease or difficulty; not only do they employ their intelligence and will in the accomplishment of their end, but they also comprehend that they have a destiny, and that it is the enigma called life. Such is the gradation presented by the different kind of beings comprising the creation.

We must not, however, believe that man rises early to the conception of this grand thought, nor to the conception of those numerous problems which spring necessarily from it. No, gentlemen, man is nothing but an animal for a long time; to be sure, a more perfect animal than others, but one whose intelligence never rises, however, to any of those problems which are truly human, and which animals can never conceive or attempt to solve. During the whole of the first portion of his short career, man's life is a dream of which he knows nothing—a darkness, into which the light has

never penetrated. Wants are created in him, certain faculties appear and are developed. He is carried by these desires and by these faculties, toward certain objects; his intelligence teaches him, with the assistance of experience, to recognize these objects, to satisfy these wants, to exercise and develop these faculties. He even succeeds—a thing which happens to animals in a very small degree—in combining all the possible means in his power in order to attain the most complete satisfaction of his desires, and the greatest development of his faculties. During a long time, however, he does this unconsciously, and without asking himself why he does it. The phenomenon of reason conceiving the idea of destiny, conceiving that everything has an end, conceiving that man has his, and that this end has a necessary relation with that of the universe, this phenomenon appears in man after the lapse of a considerable time. The day on which it finally appears is a marked one—a day not to be forgotten: but this day is a long time in coming, and until it does come, it can be said that the life of man is only the life of an animal in its highest phase.

It appears that the first portion of life, which is clearly that of the infant, is drawn out to a very great length among the common people, and that even, in a very large number, it occupies the whole of their existence. In fact, in casting our eyes

upon society which surrounds us, what do we see there? Where do we find men filled with the grand problem of human destiny—men whom this problem perplexes—men whom this problem agitates and elevates—men who give a single thought to it, and spend a single moment in its contemplation?

If each of us happens to know some such men, we know, also, that they exist in very small numbers, and that the multitude which surrounds us is not composed of such materials. In looking upon the spectacle presented to us by this multitude, and the thousands of beings who live from day to day, pursuing the different objects of their passions, well satisfied when they have attained them, disappointed when unsuccessful in the pursuit; but whether happy or deceived, carried away continually by an ambition always new, by desires always young, and boldly playing their part without ever thinking to ask themselves the meaning of this play which gives them so much evil, and in which they figure, not knowing why—in seeing, I repeat, the reality of human life, we would believe that the high privilege of understanding that we have a destiny belongs less to humanity than to philosophy, and that, if this is the fact that distinguishes man from the animal, it is only by exception that he takes the higher rank accorded to him.

We may say with truth, gentlemen, that man does not rise to these high thoughts until late, and even when he turns his mind to them, his interests and passions soon get the uppermost, and tend constantly to make him forget them. It is only in some extraordinary occasions, in some unusual circumstances, that his mind is elevated to these high thoughts. This is true of the generality of men, and this is also true of those educated minds, who are carried backward and forward, like other men, by the flow and ebb of circumstances, and who thus pass a large portion of their lives in yielding obedience to their nature, without considering toward what they are driven. The fact is certain and incontestable, and yet there is not a man, I venture to say, no matter how poor by birth, how little enlightened by society, how badly treated, so to speak, by nature, by fortune and his fellow beings, who does not one day or other in the course of his life, under the influence of some heavy calamity, propose to himself this fearful question which overhangs us all like a dark cloud—this decisive question, "Why is man here, and what is the meaning of the part he plays?" You, gentlemen, can testify to the truth of this assertion, as the question I propose is one not unknown to you, for it is one known to every man who has had some experience of life, and who has had some suffering. It

remains for us to learn what these circumstances are which take us from the rank of animals and elevate us to a thought, which is the thought of morality—the thought of humanity.

It is evident that if man did not contain within himself those two principles which I stated at the beginning, man never would conceive the question, and would never propose it to himself. It is simply because man is capable of comprehending that everything is created for a certain end, and that, in the whole universe, the end of each particular thing is connected with the end of all, that man is troubled about his own destiny, and the revelation existing between his destiny and that of the world. If you take away reason from man, and leave him only intelligence, placing him under the influence of any circumstance whatever, such a thought would never be suggested to him. Reason is born with men, but it lies dormant for some time, and requires violent shakings, if I can so express myself, to wake it up, and cause it to display to view the principles which it contains. Up to this time, the principles exist as if they had no existence. Every man contains within himself from his infancy, the generating principles of the moral question, and yet this moral question does not arise until late, and seems hardly to arise at all in a large number of minds. We ought then to find

out what circumstances succeed in rousing the human reason, and oblige us to open our eyes upon the enigma of life.

Man, perhaps, gentlemen, would never ask himself why he was placed in this world, if the tendencies of his nature were continually and completely satisfied. A perfect, an invariable harmony between the inclination of man's desires and the course of affairs would, perhaps, leave his reason dormant. It is the evil, gentlemen, the evil which exists everywhere in the condition of humanity, even in those temporary pleasures called happiness, that awakes his reason, and forces him to torment himself about human destiny.

At the beginning of life, our nature, awakening with all the desires and faculties with which it is endowed, meets a world which seems to offer an unlimited field to the satisfaction of the former, and to the development of the latter. At the sight of the world, which appears full of happiness, our nature springs forward filled with hopes and illusions. But it is not in the condition of humanity that any of these hopes should be fulfilled, that any of these illusions should be verified. Out of the numerous passions which God has planted in us, out of the numerous faculties with which we are gifted, examine and see which of them has its end, and attains it in this world. It seems that the

world which surrounds us has been constructed in such a way as to render such a result impossible. And yet these desires and these faculties spring from our nature; what they wish is what our nature wishes; what our nature wishes is the end for which it was created—its happiness—its good. Our nature suffers then, gentlemen, and not only suffers, but is surprised and vexed; for, as it did not create itself, it did not depend upon our nature to have or not to have these tendencies; the satisfaction of these tendencies appears then not only natural but even lawful. Our nature finds, however, that the laws both of nature and of justice are violated by what happens; and from this arises, in the first place, that long incredulity, and then that deep protestation which we offer against the miseries of life. While our youth lasts, misfortune astonishes rather than alarms us; it seems that an anomaly has happened, and our confidence is not shaken. This anomaly is in vain repeated, we are not undeceived, we prefer to accuse ourselves rather than doubt the justice of Providence; we believe that, if we are occasionally mistaken, the fault is in us, and we encourage ourselves to be more skillful; and even when our skill has failed a thousand times, we still insist upon believing that the fault is in us. But finally the sad truth comes to us, either through some great shock

which opens our eyes suddenly, or is brought to us by experience as life flows on: then the hopes, which had mitigated our misery, vanish; then that bitter vexation succeeds which renders that misery more painful; then from the bottom of our hearts overwhelmed with grief, from the depth of our reason wounded in its most familiar beliefs, springs up inevitably the melancholy question: why has man been placed in this world?

Do not believe, gentlemen, that the miseries of life alone have the privilege of turning our minds toward this problem; it rises as well from our pleasures as our pains, because our nature is not the less deceived in the former than in the latter. In the first moment of the satisfaction of our desires, we have the presumption, or rather the innocence to think ourselves happy; but if this happiness continues, soon that which was delightful begins to fade; and where we had expected to enjoy a complete satisfaction, we experience nothing more than a slight satisfaction, succeeded by a still slighter one, which is exhausted little by little, and soon is extinguished in tediousness and disgust. Such is the unavoidable end of all human happiness, such is the fatal law which no one can escape. If in the moment of triumph of one passion, you have the good fortune to be seized by another, then, carried away by this new passion, you will

escape, it is true, the disenchantment of the first; and it is thus that in a much occupied and very hurried life, you can live a considerable time in the happiness of this world before learning its vanity. This giddiness, however, cannot last always; the moment comes when this impetuous inconstancy in the pursuit of happiness, which springs from the variety and the indecision of our desires, becomes finally settled, and when our nature, collecting and concentrating in one single passion all the desire of happiness which it possesses, beholds this happiness, loves it and desires it in one thing alone; to which it aspires with all possible energy. Then, no matter what may be the passion, then comes inevitably the bitter experience which chance had postponed; for, this happiness, so ardently and so entirely desired, is hardly gained before it startles the soul with its insufficiency; our soul exhausts itself in vain in trying to discover what it had dreamed about; this search even causes the apparent happiness to wither and fade; it is no longer what it seemed to be—it does not hold to its promise; we have gained all the happiness that life can give, and yet the desire of happiness is not extinguished. Happiness is then a shadow, life a deception, our desires a snare. To such clear proof we have nothing to answer; it is more decisive than the proof from misery; for, in wretchedness,

we can still deceive ourselves, and by accusing our bad fortune, acquit the nature of things, while now it is the very nature of things that is convicted of perversity; the heart of man and all the pleasures of life placed before him, and yet the heart of man is not in the least satisfied. The melancholy reflection which elevates man to the thought of his destiny, which leads him to torment himself, and ask himself what his destiny is, is produced oftener from the experience of the pleasures than the pains of life. These are two of the occasions which give birth to the question, but they are not the only ones. In the midst of cities, man seems to be the lord of creation; it is here that all his apparent superiority shines forth, it is here that he appears to be master of the world's stage, or rather, to occupy it entirely for himself. But, when this being, so strong, so proud, so full of himself, so exclusively taken up with his own interests in the bosom of great cities and in the midst of the multitude of his fellow-beings, finds himself, by chance, cast into the midst of nature, alone in face of the heavens without limit, in face of the horizon stretching far off and beyond which there are other horizons still, in the midst of those grand productions of nature which overwhelm him if not by their intelligence at least by their grandeur, when, seeing at his feet from the top of some lofty moun-

tain, and under the light of the stars, small villages losing themselves in distant forests, which are themselves lost in the immense expanse, he considers that these villages are peopled by beings as feeble as himself, and compares these beings and their wretched habitations with nature which surrounds them, and compares this nature with our world, on the surface of which it is nothing but a speck, and this world, in turn, with the thousand other worlds floating in space; at the sight of this spectacle, man despises his miserable passions always thwarted, his miserable pleasures ending always in disgust: then comes also the question of learning what he is and what he is doing in the world, and then also he places before himself the problem of his destiny.

This is not all. Not only happiness, misfortune, the comparison of our weakness with the grandeur of nature, but also our thoughts turned either to the history of our race or the history of the world inhabited by us, call up the problem of destiny in the minds of men the most preoccupied and the most exclusively busied in satisfying their desires and passions. You, who have read history, consider for a moment how humanity has advanced.

We see, arriving in the great plains of Asia, races of men who descend from the central mountains of that vast continent, races having perhaps

ancestors, but having no history. They come, wild, almost naked, hardly armed; they come, without saying where they came from, and to whom they belong; suddenly they arrive and take possession of those plains. From another side and from the deserts of Arabia come other races, who have different brains and different ideas, but who are just as ignorant of their origin and their ancestors. When they meet each other, they meet as enemies; long contests take place; great empires are established, overturned, however, almost as soon as established; one race is finally victorious, which remains in possession of those lands, and rules there alone, holding the others in subjection. This empire, scarcely established, comes in contact with Europe. There, also, are men without a history, having different brains, different ideas, a different manner of living. These two races, the one Asiatic the other Greek, contend for the supremacy; the Greeks gain the victory, and Asia is subjugated. Soon a new people living in the West arises, increases rapidly, and swallows up the Greek race and its conquests in the immense jaws of its empire. This other people is itself surrounded by races unknown to themselves and others, who have been living in the West and North of Europe for an unknown period of time. These men, who resemble neither the Romans, nor Greeks, nor

Orientals, having a different faith, different ideas, and different languages, have also their mission, which stirs them up in the bosom of their forests, and which summons them in turn upon the world's stage. They appear when their hour has come, and Rome crumbles away beneath their breath. Later still, we penetrate into countries hitherto unknown; we discover the north of Asia, the middle of Africa, America, and the thousand islands scattered like dust on the surface of the ocean, and everywhere we find new nations—nations of all colors, white, black and copper colored, with heads of all kinds of shapes, of a civilization of all degrees, with ideas of all kinds; and no one knows whence they come, what they are doing here, or to what they are advancing, and no one knows by what bond they are attached to common humanity.

When we reflect upon the history of the human race, upon the profound darkness which everywhere surrounds its origin, upon those races which are discovered everywhere at the same time, and everywhere plunged in the same ignorance of their origin, upon the differences of every kind which separate them still more than distance, or mountains or seas; upon the astonishment which seizes them when they meet each other, upon the unceasing hostility which is waged between them from the moment of meeting; when we think of the

mysterious predestination which calls them, one by one, upon the stage of the world, which causes them to shine for a moment and then soon reshrouds them in darkness, a feeling of fear seizes us, and we feel overwhelmed by the mysterious fatality which seems to weigh upon humanity. What is then this humanity of which we form a part? Whence does it come? Toward what does it tend? Is it like the flowers of the fields and the trees of the forests? Did it spring from the earth, like them, upon a day fixed by the general laws of the universe, to return again to earth some day like them? Or, as its pride has dreamt, is the creation only a theatre upon which humanity comes to perform an act of its immortal destiny? And if the light which did not shine upon its cradle would only make clear its development! But, who knows toward what it is advancing, and how it is advancing? The Eastern civilization fell before the Greek; the Greek civilization fell before the Roman; a new civilization, risen from the forests of Germany, destroyed the Roman; what will become of this new civilization? Will it conquer the world, or is it the destiny of every civilization to expand and then to fall? In a word, has humanity merely revolved in the same circle, or has it advanced? or has it, as some suppose, receded? It has been thought by some that all

light was at the beginning, and that from age to age this light is gradually being extinguished, and that we, without suspecting it, are advancing toward a state of barbarity by the road of civilization. Man stands amazed before these problems, humiliated that he belongs to the species; the annihilation of the species in the midst of a sea of darkness, freezes his heart and confounds his imagination. He asks himself what this law is by which men move on like a herd, unconsciously, and which carries them from an unknown origin to an unknown end; in this way again is placed before man the question of his destiny.

Again, there is another inducement, one still stronger, an inducement caused by the recent scientific discoveries, to propose to ourselves this question: You know that in digging into the bowels of the earth, testimony has been discovered, authentic monuments found, of the history of this little globe inhabited by us. We are convinced there was a time when nature produced only plants, plants of immense size, by the side of which ours dwindle into insignificance, and which did not cover with their shade a single living being. You know it has been proved that a great revolution destroyed this creation as if it was not worthy of the hand that formed it. You know that at the second creation

among those large plants and under the domes of those gigantic forests which had marked the first creation, were produced monstrous reptiles, the first attempts at animal organization, the first occupants of the earth of which they were the sole inhabitants. Nature destroyed this creation, and in the following she cast quadrupeds upon the earth, whose species no longer exists—misshapen animals, rudely organized, which lived and reproduced themselves with difficulty, and which seemed like the first attempt of an awkward workman. Nature again destroyed this creation as she had the others, and from experiment to experiment, advancing from the imperfect to the more perfect, she arrived, finally, at this last creation which placed man for the first time upon the earth. Thus, man appears to be merely an experiment on the part of the Creator, an experiment after many others which it has pleased him to make and destroy. Those immense reptiles, those misshapen animals which have disappeared from the face of the earth, lived formerly as we now live. Why shall the day not come when our race shall be swept away—when our bones, dug from the earth, shall look to the living species like the rude attempts of an experimenting nature? and if we are but a link in the chain of creations which are less and less imperfect, but a poor proof of an

unknown type created only to be destroyed, what are we, then, and what right have we to abandon ourselves to hope and pride?

Such, gentlemen, are some of the occasions which, in the midst of a most thoughtless life, suddenly create the apparition of the problem of destiny in the mind of man. You see that we can sum up all these occasions in one formula; for what is common to them all, and what causes them to lead the mind uniformly to this melancholy reflection, is the fact that they testify to the contradiction which exists between its natural grandeur and the misery of its present condition; that they disabuse it of that implicit confidence which it had in itself; and that in showing everywhere its instincts deceived, its hopes deluded, its beliefs contradicted, boundaries everywhere, darkness everywhere, weakness everywhere, they frighten the mind and force it to observe that its destiny is an enigma of which it is totally ignorant. Such is the common quality connected in all these occasions, which give the same effect to them as well as to all others partaking of this common quality. These circumstances are so numerous, and the lessons taught by them so direct and simple, that it is utterly impossible for any man, no matter how unreflecting, no matter in what condition he is, to avoid the thought of the problem of destiny during the course of a long life.

Do not think, gentlemen, that it is necessary to be wise in order to rise to this thought; the herdsman on the mountain top, in the presence of nature, thinks also in his long leisures of what he is and what those beings are who live at his feet; he, too, has had ancestors who have descended to the grave one after the other, and he asks himself for what purpose they were born, and why, after dragging out their life on this earth for some years, they died and gave up their places to others, who in turn have disappeared, and thus continually without end and without reason. The shepherd, like us, meditates upon this infinite creation, of which he is but a fragment; like us, he feels lost in the chain of beings the ends of which escape him; he, too, endeavors to find out the relation between himself and his flock of sheep, and asks himself if there are not other beings superior to himself as he is of a higher order than his own flock; and when he feels his own wretchedness, he easily conceives of creatures more perfect, more capable of happiness, surrounded by a nature better fitted to confer happiness; and of his own accord, by the authority of his intelligence, limited and weak as it is, he has the boldness to put this important and melancholy question to the Creator: "Why hast thou created me, and what means the part which I perform in this world?"

When, under the influence of one or the other of these circumstances, man has finally come to that point when he places before himself this grand question, then the doubts which it excites, if he does not immediately find the solution of them in the established faiths, are terrible.

I know that a large number of men, after conceiving the problem, seem to lose sight of it, and to trouble themselves no more about it; but do not be deceived, gentlemen: when once this idea has come to us, it cannot perish; we can divert ourselves from it, it is true, but we can never rid ourselves of it, and the reason is, because the same causes recall it continually and with more ease than they suggested it to us; because life and death, the desires and wretchedness of our nature, the grandeur of the creation and the obscurity of history speak unceasingly to the mind, the heart and the soul of man of what most regards him, and besiege him continually, and torment him, and do not allow him, when once aroused, to fall back again into repose. Henceforth, gentlemen, man is no longer what he was; henceforth man is changed; he has emerged from the state of innocence and risen to reason and reflection—to the condition properly called human. This question is like the torch in the fable of Psyche; before this fearful revelation, man yielded obedience to his instincts; and without

forethought, without solicitude, he gained or did not gain the end toward which he was driven; when he attained it he was happy, when he did not attain it he was pained; but these temporary distresses, soon effaced by the appearance of new passions, do not resemble in the least the profound sadness, the incurable melancholy which takes possession of him who has conceived the question of human destiny and caught a glimpse of the darkness surrounding it; then a new cord in man's soul is struck, and all the distractions of the world cannot prevent the cord's being there, and cannot prevent the slightest touch from causing it to vibrate.

Then, too, are born—then, too, are developed for the first time in the depths of the human soul, three feelings hitherto dormant, which can only be awakened by the warmth of this sad light. These sublime feelings, the glory and the torment of our nature, are the *poetical*, the *religious* and the *philosophical* feelings.

The age of innocence has its poetry, and ripe age has its own, and such is the superiority of the latter, that when it reveals itself to us, it causes to fade and wither away, and utterly destroys, the beauty of the first. It is strange to call that superficial inspiration poetry, which amuses itself in celebrating the frivolous pleasures and in deploring the temporary pains of the passions. We

must distinguish carefully between true poetry and those ordinary songs which are addressed only to the lowest and most sensual parts of our souls. True poetry expresses only one thing—the perplexities of the human soul before the question of its destiny. It is of this alone, gentlemen, that the true lyre speaks—the lyre of the great poets—that lyre which vibrates with so melancholy a strain in the poetry of Byron and in the verses of Lamartine. Those who have not lived long enough can understand but partially those deep accents, sublime version of an eternal lamentation; but they vibrate deeply in minds ripe with experience, in which the mysteries of life and death, the destinies of man and mankind have developed the true poetic feeling. To such minds alone is it given to comprehend lofty lyric poetry; to them alone is it given to *feel* poetry; for lyric comprehends all poetry; the rest has merely its form.

What is true of the poetic is also true of the religious feeling. Man can acquire a religion in his youth; this can be taught him like anything else; but what religion is, a man does not, cannot know until he has perplexed himself with human destiny, until the experience of life has led him or forced him to it. What is then a religion actually? Examine, gentlemen, and you will find that a religion is nothing more than an answer to the problem of

human destiny and all the questions consequent upon it. Of what importance is the solution of these problems to him who has never considered them, who has never felt the desire of solving them? Can we understand the solution when we do not, as yet, understand the problem? Can we be sensible of the value of the light, when we have not known the perplexity of the darkness? No, gentlemen. Can we then have a religion before being religious, that is, before having need of what religion gives, before conceiving it, before aspiring to it, before knowing its value? All that comes in time and can only come on the day when man reflects upon himself, when the mysteries of his destiny become apparent, when a longing to know them seizes him, and when all the powers of his soul, alarmed, demand, invoke light, as the lips of the thirsty traveller call out for the spring of the desert. From that day man is religious, before that time he is not.

That day, too, and only that day, produces in us the philosophical feeling; for a system of philosophy, like a religious system, is but an answer to the questions interesting to humanity. For two years, gentlemen, we have been investigating together the nature of man. For what purpose was this study? Why this investigation? Do you think it was pure curiosity on my part or yours to know

what we are? The knowledge of man is undoubtedly a noble conquest in itself, and one which deserves to be followed up; but the ambition of making the conquest is not philosophy. Philosophy is the seeking for a solution of those terrifying problems which agitate the human soul; the philosophical feeling is the desire of pursuing these solutions with the torch of reason and science; and if philosophy is taken up with the nature of man, it is because the knowledge of man is the only road which can conduct us to these solutions. It is not in studying man, but in studying him with this view, that we are philosophers; it is because the botanist, the naturalist, the geologist, the historian, can proceed in their researches with this end in view, that they can be philosophers; otherwise both they and the psychologist would be merely scholars. Philosophy is like poetry and religion; its nature, its end and value are revealed to the heart of man (I am right in saying the heart) only when it feels the problem of its destiny weighing upon it, and when anxious doubt seizes it in the midst of its primitive carelessness.

Philosophy is a matter of the heart, like poetry and religion; if we put our mind to it only, it is possible that we may some day become philosophers, but it is evident that we are not as yet philosophers.

Poetry, religion, philosophy are the three manifestations of the same feeling, which satisfies itself in the first by harmonious lamentations, in the second by a lively faith, in the last by laborious researches; it is this which makes poetical, religious and philosophical minds brotherly; it is this which causes them to understand each other so well, although speaking such different languages; it is this which causes poetry, religion and philosophy to have no effect upon souls, which do not know, which do not as yet comprehend the tempest that agitates them.

Such, gentlemen, is the great revolution excited in man by the apparition of the problem of destiny. This problem does not, however, remain, as it was when it first entered our minds; it ferments, so to speak, and gives birth to a multitude of other questions contained in it, which inevitably demand an explanation in every understanding, into which it has entered.

In fact, gentlemen, this problem is not great only through the interest which it inspires, it is great from its vastness, that is from the vast questions which it brings with it, and which, following in its train, make an inroad upon the human understanding. It brings them, gentlemen, because it implies them and is implied by them; because we can neither solve them without it, nor it without them,

and because they form with it and it with them one single grand problem. Philosophy has divided this problem in order to solve it. You know that the inquiry into the destiny of man in this world, is called *morality;* the inquiry of his destiny before and after this life, *religion;* the inquiry of the destiny of the human race, *philosophy of history;* the inquiry of the origin and laws of the universe, *cosmology;* the inquiry as to the nature of God and the relations existing between him and man and the creation, *theology;* you know that it distinguishes many other problems, *the law of nature*, *political law*, *the law of nations*, etc. All these divisions are useful, inasmuch as by them we must analyze a subject, to study it; but do not think that these lines, drawn across the subject of philosophy, destroy its radical unity. The questions are distinct, but inseparable; they are only branches of the same trunk; he who thinks of one, must think of all; he who wishes to solve one, is obliged to solve all; they rest on each other, they imply each other, they presuppose each other, they make but one in the mind of man.

For instance, try to find out what is the best possible government. How will you find it out? Is not the best possible government that which conducts society to its end in the best way or which allows it to attain it in the best way. We

must then know the end of society, in order to know what is the best possible government. But how can we know the end of society, except by knowing the end of man himself? Society is only a collection of human beings, and the end of a collection can only be the same as that of the elements composing it. Thus the problem of politics is a corollary of the problem of society, while the social is but a corollary of the moral problem; and it is just as impossible to consider the consequence independently of the principle, as to stop at the principle without descending to the consequence. Again, how can we separate the moral from the religious problem? Who has ever demonstrated to you that the whole destiny of man is inclosed between the cradle and the tomb? Where have you learnt that birth is the true beginning, that death is the true end? He who, during the four thousand years that humanity has been thinking, had made out this demonstration, must have kept the secret well; for humanity, which has always thought the contrary, which has always meditated over the cradle of the infant and over the tomb of the old man, still persists in its belief, and science has not yet brought to light a proof, a fact which seriously shakes it. No one can, in the inquiry concerning man's destiny, confine himself to the period between birth and death. He must, with the

human race, and in the name of its wants and its reason, overleap these false limits, and penetrate to the past and the future of man, that is, the science rightly called religion. Then only can he embrace the problem of destiny of man in its whole extent, only then will he be able to comprehend this destiny, such as it is; for, if we mutilate it in any way, we falsify it; for some portion of this destiny will remain obscure, when the whole has not been explained. This is the reason that religion enters into ethics, into politics, into the law of nations; these sciences, in fact, are based on morality, and morality is not clear and not complete except in its alliance with religion. The mind cannot then any more resist the inclination which carries it from the moral to the religious problem, than it can the logic which makes it ascend to the moral, in order to solve the religious problem.

The bonds uniting all these problems with that of the origin and destiny of the species, are not less strict. Attempt to separate in thought the lot of man from that humanity, or the lot of humanity from that of man, you cannot do it. The mind goes from one to the other by a deep logic, of which reflection has no difficulty in rendering an account. In fact, man searches for his own destiny in searching for that of the species; as long as he has not determined the one, he cannot know the

other. Man cannot stop at his own particular end; he is forced to busy himself with the destiny of himself, and not only with that of humanity, but with that of the different beings peopling the creation, and with that of the entire universe. On starting from himself, he proceeds inevitably to all things, and to God, source of all things; and as he proceeds to everything only by virtue of the anxiety which he has for himself, he can think of nothing, he can ponder over no problem, without reverting to himself, or, to speak more correctly, without placing himself, without keeping himself continually in the centre of all things. This is the reason that the problem of human destiny is so fruitful, that the question, when it has once appeared in the understanding, evokes a thousand others, and that all the questions which philosophy separates for solution, remain, nevertheless, united by an indissoluble chain, and form, in reality, only one single problem, which, to the eye of common sense as well as of reason, is only solved in one of its parts, when it is in all.

This dependence is so strong and natural, that it is perceived by the dullest as well as the acutest intellects. When the peasant has once asked himself the question, "Why am I here?" his intelligence does not stand still any more than that of Aristotle or Pascal; his mind, like theirs, feels the

logical necessity which leads from this problem to others; it yields obedience to the necessity, and goes as far as their minds. Question a man of the lower class, and you will be convinced that in this, as well as in everything else, there is a much smaller difference between man and man, between one intelligence and another, than we have the ridiculous habit of believing. Every human understanding, aroused by the problem of destiny, proceeds to all the consequences of this problem. From this, it happens that it has the virtue of elevating and of leading the dullest minds to many ideas and much meditation, and that the shepherd, in whom the revelation of this problem has taken place, is a creature more fully developed than the most accomplished mind in which it has not appeared.

All that I have just said, gentlemen, in regard to the vastness of the problem of human destiny, and the indissoluble connection of the questions which it excites, and in regard to the participation of all human beings in the understanding of these questions, and the anxiety caused by them, is written in deep characters in the history of humanity. In fact, while the poetry of all nations, the most ancient as well as the most modern, the most savage as well as the most civilized, chants either the melancholy doubts inspired by these

questions, or the meditations, sometimes gloomy and sometimes brilliant, by which men were driven to attempt a solution, we behold, rising on the theatre of history, two classes of monuments, which testify in a still more authentic way to the accuracy of my statements; I mean the different religions and systems of philosophy.

What is a religion? What is a philosophical system? I have already told you, gentlemen, and I again repeat it, they are two different answers to the questions which concern humanity. Why have we these two answers to one and the same enigma? We will speak of this later; but first it is well for you to notice that in no corner of the globe, at no period of time, has one at least of these answers been wanting. Systems of philosophy come only with civilization; but with or without civilization, wherever there have been men, or wherever there are any, there have been and there are religious beliefs. Religious feelings have been found in the wretched inhabitants of the poles, who live in houses of snow, and in the stupid savages of New Holland, who in everything else are not more advanced than animals. A proof incontestable, gentlemen, that it is sufficient for man to be a man in order to have these questions spring up—a clear testimony of the anxiety which they produce, since man has discovered a solution, when

he hardly knows how to satisfy the most simple and the most pressing of his physical wants. If you examine all the religions which have prevailed for a long time, and governed a large portion of humanity, and all the systems of philosophy which have established schools and successively rallied around them the enlightened part of humanity, you will find that those religions and those systems have this in common, that they investigated and solved without exception all the problems which we have proposed. This is the sign by which every grand religion and every grand philosophical doctrine is recognized; and it can be said that a religion which neglects one of these problems is only a half-religion, as well as a doctrine of philosophy which does not answer them all is but a half-philosophy.

Do you wish for an example of the greatness and extent of a grand religion? Consider the Christian religion. Here is a small book which is taught to infants, and about which questions are asked them at church. Read this little book, which is the Catechism; you will there find a solution of all the questions which I have placed before you—of all of them, without exception. Ask the Christian whence comes the human race, he can answer you; toward what it is advancing, he can tell you; in what way it advances, he can tell. Ask a little

child, who has never thought of the subject, why he is here and what will become of him after death, he will give you a sublime answer, which he does not understand, but which is nevertheless admirable. Ask him how the world was created, and for what purpose: why God has placed animals and plants upon it; how the earth has been peopled—if by one family or many; why men speak different languages; why they suffer; why they contend with each other; how all this will terminate. He can tell you. The origin of the world, the origin of the species, the question of the races, the destiny of man in this life and the life to come, the relations of man with God, the duties of man toward his fellow beings, the rights of man over the creation—he is ignorant of nothing; and when he reaches manhood he will have no doubts on the subject of ethics, of politics, of the law of nations; for these all spring from and flow clearly, and as it were spontaneously, from Christianity. This is what I call a grand religion; I recognize it from the fact that it leaves not a single question interesting to humanity unanswered. If you approach now the great philosophers, you will find the same comprehensiveness in their systems. Look at Epicurus: there is not a question which concerns humanity which has not its solution, either good or bad, in his system. He has given

an answer to all of them. It is the same thing with Platonism, with Stoicism, with Kantism, and with all the grand systems of philosophy. Like every grand religion, every great philosophical system solves all the problems which concern and perplex humanity.

Let us notice now the difference existing between a religion and a system of philosophy. Produced by the same want, these two kinds of solutions were not, however, produced in the same way, and from this circumstance it happens, that in answering the same questions, and addressing themselves to the same humanity, they appropriate to themselves different forms, and do not establish their authority on the same basis.

Transport yourselves, gentlemen, in thought to those remote ages which the traditions of all nations indistinctly recall, when the human race, still small in numbers, still unarmed and savage, found itself scattered over the surface of the earth, in presence of a nature which it had not as yet attempted to subjugate, and of whose laws it was ignorant. If today, when all the movements of this gigantic power have been calculated by the genius of man and subjected to his wants, we still tremble occasionally in the presence of nature, and feel humbled when her voice thunders, judge what those few families, lost in her bosom, must have experienced,

when in her savage and primitive strength she displayed herself unknown and unconquered around them. If ever man must have felt his wretchedness, and been terrified at it, it was surely in those early times, when nature was grander and he feebler, when nature's grandeur and his weakness were increased by his ignorance and destitution. From this arose, gentlemen, that profound fear of humanity at its cradle, the trace of which is imprinted in the ancient traditions of all nations, and which we find among all the savage tribes of the four quarters of the globe. This was the cause of the immediate appearance of philosophical and religious questions in the bosom of all the newly created societies, and of the profound attention excited by them—a manifestation so ancient, an attention so exclusive, that the facts relative to those questions and their solution are everywhere the only records which men have preserved of those wonderful ages immediately following the creation.

What problems these are, gentlemen, for the frightened imagination, and for the ignorant reason of the first of mankind! At the very moment that humanity felt most sensibly the urgent need of solving them, it was, and felt itself, most incapable of it. In fact humanity possessed none of those ideas of nature or of man which experience has gradually gathered, and which have thrown light

upon a part of these mysteries. Standing in the presence of these formidable problems, with the consciousness of its own ignorance, humanity could not but feel a profound despair, and expect from Heaven alone the truth for which it was eager. And yet, gentlemen, we do not see that this despair has been anywhere justified; to these questions, so anciently proposed, we find everywhere solutions not less anciently found and admitted. The reason is, there are facts existing in the human soul—there are, in the position of man face to face with nature, relations which cannot escape any consciousness, and in these simple data, there exists for human reason so strongly excited, for the imagination so powerfully aroused, the germ of an imperfect solution of the problem.

We also see that man hardly proposes this problem to himself, that he hardly experiences the anxiety of solving it, before he comes to a solution. Everywhere the consciousness of man finds out a solution of the questions which concern him—a solution imperfect, strange perhaps to eyes that are blind, but in which there is a considerable portion of truth, and which does for a beginning. In the position in which those were in which this phenomenon took place, the appearance of some explanation to questions so interesting and so important

must have arisen, not as the result of human will, but the result of a supernatural intervention. Only when we have made an effort to seek the truth, are we conscious of gaining it; but we never make the effort except we have caught a glimpse of the truth. The effort of the intellect, notwithstanding appearances, has for its end only elucidation; and in order to make anything clear, we must first have the consciousness of possessing it. In the first manifestation of the truth of these important problems, not only was it possible, but it was natural for men in whom it appeared, to delude themselves, and to imagine that some inspiration from Heaven had descended to them, and had revealed the truth. Which, if they did not believe, the enthusiasm of the people believed and must have believed; and when a few generations had passed away, the circumstances of the event, which would have appeared human at the time, became divine like the rest. From this came the nature of the belief accorded to the first solution of the problem of human destiny. Although they answered to the light of the period, it was not on this account that they were received; their celestial origin had clearer evidence for men than their uncertain truth; and the more prosaic, the more difficult to understand of these two evidences, was based upon the more poetical and the more easily comprehend-

ed. If now you consider the exaltation of those who found out those solutions, the naturally poetical imagination and the necessarily figurative language of the primitive races, and lastly, the proneness to the marvellous which belongs peculiarly to all nations lost in the midst of nature—who live in the presence of the mysterious causes which animate it, you will readily conceive that if faith must have been the characteristic of the primitive beliefs, mythology must have been the form of the first dogmas. Such are, in fact, the two characteristics of these ancient solutions of the problem of human destiny, and of all those which afterward sprang spontaneously, like them, from the common sense of mankind. Such are in other words, with a less or greater difference, the characteristics of every religion.

It is only at a later period, gentlemen, and with the progress of civilization, that systems of philosophy arise by the side of religions. Systems of philosophy were created on that day, when some men, tormented like the rest of mankind by the problems concerning humanity, and accustomed to recognize truth in no other way than by its own testimony, attempted to solve these problems with their reason alone, regarding only the facts which were given to their reason to attain and comprehend. You see at the first glance that solutions obtained

in this way could not have the same characteristics as the former. The author of a philosophical system having built up his own system, cannot be deceived in regard to its origin; the investigations he made he made willingly; the means he employed he employed voluntarily; what he discovered is therefore incontestably the product of his laborious meditations; he can, then, only put faith in it because he sees in it the truth; he can, then, only wish that people would believe it for the same reasons. And as the results he found, he found with his reason alone, their form must be rational—that is, the simple and exact expression of the truth. From which you see, gentlemen, that if philosophical systems are inspired by the same desire and answer the same problems as religion, they are not based on the same authority, and do not appear under the same form. The claim of a religion is its origin; its form is poetic; the claim of a system of philosophy is its testimony; its form is rational. Such are the opposite characteristics which mark them.

If you will reflect upon this, gentlemen, you will understand that during many ages the generality of mankind was incapable of accepting the truth under a philosophical form, and that if religions had their cradle and their empires in the bosom of the masses, it was because religions were infinitely

better adapted to their wants. The reasons of this are so numerous, that I must choose, and limit myself to the principal. In the first place, such is the fearful nature and vastness of the problems to be solved, that it seems impossible to the masses that human reason should succeed in it, and they think it infinitely more natural that God, who is good, should have revealed the solution to us. In the second place, no matter how bold any system is, it is never so bold as a religion, on account of the way in which it is produced; so that the most daring philosophy, leaving still unexplained a multitude of mysteries, which religion cuts through, satisfies the curiosity and the desires of humanity much less completely. In the third place, a system of philosophy, having no other claim to belief than its truth, and the masses not being capable of verifying it, it has neither authority nor influence over them. In the fourth place, philosophical language is unintelligible to the masses, because it represents the truth of things, and because the common people only seize hold of the appearance. The forms which obscure the truth to the eyes of philosophy, are precisely what render it perceptible to the generality of men. Do not believe that the symbols and the myths which surrounded the first religions, were for the people an obstacle to their comprehensions; far from it, it was their lan-

guage and the language of the age. In proportion as the intelligence of the mass makes progress and acquires acuteness, this language divests itself, so to speak, and becomes more spiritual; from this it comes that religions, one after the other, speak to the masses a less and less figurative language, which approaches nearer and nearer to the languages of philosophy, and that, in place of the innumerable myths of the early ages, they substitute more and more simple symbols. The progress in art is marked in the same way, for the same reason.

As time is urgent, gentlemen, and I have yet much to say to you, I can give you merely a hasty sketch.

I have endeavored to make you understand both the nature and extent of the problem of human destiny; you perceive that, historically, two kinds of solutions have been given to this problem—the religious and the philosophical solutions; you see the reason of the different forms which they appropriated, and how, although equally containing the truth, the latter were more peculiarly made for reflecting minds, and the former for the multitude, at least until the multitude reached a high degree of civilization and of enlightenment.

As, in the sciences, more perfect ideas succeed those which are less perfect, and more intelligible

and more complete systems succeed less perfect and more confused systems; so in the labor of the whole of humanity on the problem of human destiny, humanity has advanced from obscure to less obscure, from incomplete to more complete solutions, by a progress, the rapidity of which has never ceased to increase, and the end of which is indefinite. There has been, consequently, a succession of solutions, or of dogmas, which have, one after the other, governed either the whole or a large portion of humanity.

The reason of a certain dogma ending, or what comes to the same thing, of a certain solution of the great question of destiny being abandoned, is that the enlightenment of the part of humanity, which had accepted this solution, having increased in time, and finding itself superior to this solution, this solution is of course not sufficient. Then from this superior enlightenment comes first doubt, and afterward the creation of a new solution. Thus it is that solutions have followed each other under the double forms of religions and philosophical systems—the one for the mass, the other for thinking minds.

There is no repose for humanity, from the day that it possesses no longer a solution of this problem, which it can regard as true. In fact, how can a man live in peace, when his reason, charged with

the conduct of life, falls into uncertainty upon life itself, and knows nothing of what it ought to know, in order to fulfill its mission? How can we live in peace when we know neither whence we come, where we are going, nor what we have to do in this world; when we are ignorant of what man and the species and the creation mean; when everything is an enigma—a mystery, a subject of doubts and fears? To live in peace in such ignorance is a thing inconsistent and impossible. If some men can, by force of absence of mind and thoughtlessness, lull themselves to sleep in such a situation, it is an exception which does not come to the generality. As soon as doubt has taken possession of them, they are perplexed; they do not find peace again, until the doubt has disappeared.

There are then, necessarily, in the life of humanity, crises, and these crises are those periods when the light obliges humanity to throw off a received dogma, in order to create and embrace another. It is the interval separating inevitably these two solutions, that humanity suffers and is agitated; it suffers and is agitated, then because its ideas are not settled, and because, as long as its ideas are not settled on those matters which concern it the most to know with certainty, it is impossible for humanity to remain quiet, it is impossible for humanity not to suffer.

These periods are called revolutionary, and they alone deserve this name; for the only true revolutions are the revolutions of ideas; all the other movements which agitate human affairs follow for him who can see and comprehend. A revolution is then a step made by the human mind in search of truth. To condemn revolutions, is to condemn human nature, and with human nature, God, who made human nature progressive; to fight against revolutions, is to fight against the nature of things and the laws of Providence.

LECTURE II.

METHOD OF SOLVING THE PROBLEM.

We have proposed the problem on which all our efforts will be concentrated; not only have we proposed it, but decomposed it, in noticing the particular questions which it implies or which it gives rise to. We have felt the importance of those questions, and the relations of dependence uniting them; and lastly, we have shown that now, in the present situation of affairs, it is more important than ever to meditate deeply over the problem of human destiny, and to attempt to discover a solution of it, which can bear the double examination—the double criticism of enlightened reason and simple good sense.

One of these criticisms, gentlemen, is not the less to be feared than the other; for if enlightened minds are capable of penetrating further in the investigation of truth, they are much less capable than simple good sense of appreciating the accuracy and the whole truth of a doctrine. If you present to common sense the solution of one of

these questions which concern the whole world, and about which the whole world has meditated, if the solution is incomplete, exclusive, hypothetical, if, in a word, it has not sufficient breadth to answer every case, be assured that this imperfection will not escape common sense, which will reject the proposed solution. If common sense was obliged to say why the solution is displeasing, and how the solution errs, it would be much puzzled; its instinct rather than its intelligence protests. This internal feeling, although obscure, is not the less sure or the less obligatory. It is easier to make a philosopher believe an error than an ordinary man, because it is easier to lead astray by logic a man who is in the habit of making use of it, than him whose judgment has never been troubled by any subtilities. There is some truth in the theory of Leibnitz, who compared human intelligence to a mirror, in which is obscurely painted the image of all things, and who maintained that all the efforts of reflection ended only in making clear some portions of this confused image. If there is but one figure present, it gives none the less a true idea of that which is taking place in the human understanding. Involuntarily our intellect receives a confused impression of all things, which is so much the more truthful as it is the more natural and less sought for. The multitude do not advance beyond this

primitive impression; this impression forms the common sense. When we, as philosophers, wish to understand clearly what the world perceives confusedly, we apply our attention to these common data; but, wholly taken up with the particular point which we are considering, we bestow often an importance upon it which it does not deserve; we end by forgetting, or at least by neglecting, a certain number of other points standing in the shade, and we thus fall into exclusive and hypothetical opinions; while common sense, which continues to see everything obscurely but equally, shuns this danger, preserves the feeling of the whole, and does not permit it to be sacrificed to narrow and partial views. We should therefore have the highest regard for the common opinion in our investigations of those matters which concern the world, and about which all mankind have some knowledge. It is prudent and best, when we believe we have made a discovery, to submit it to the test of universal good sense, to see if it contains nothing repugnant to good sense, and omits nothing which good sense demands. This plan is especially applicable to philosophy, which is occupied with precisely those questions the most interesting to humanity. We will endeavor, gentlemen, not to forget this; we will not accept our solutions, from the fact alone that they appear to

us under cover of our own criticism ; we will make them stand the test of the universal sentiment, whose negative criticism is the veritable touchstone of the excellence of any system.

As I devoted my first lecture to laying down the problem and making you feel the importance and vastness of it, so I shall devote this present lecture to finding out what means we possess and what method we ought to pursue in order to solve it. This lecture will, therefore, gentlemen, be dry, and I must ask your pardon for it in advance; but you come here for the purpose of instruction, and you know that the flowers are rare in the paths leading to science.

In contemplating the vastness of the question, the grandeur and diversity of the problems embraced by it, and above all their obscurity, we are tempted in the first place to despair of finding a solution, and we perceive that human reason, in the consciousness of its weakness, thought that God alone could pour light into this profound obscurity. I grant, gentlemen, it would be pleasant and very convenient for human reason, if He who created all things, both the world and us, and who knows the secrets of his own work, had vouchsafed to tell us the meaning of this enigma. Before the authority of such a revelation all our doubts would vanish, and if such a revelation existed, we would have

nothing more to search for. The existence, however, of these doubts proves sufficiently that God did not give us this knowledge; for a revealed solution would be a perfect one, and a perfect solution would have put an end to all anxiety and to all investigation. It appears, then, gentlemen, that God has left to human reason the laborious task of discovering by itself this solution. Why should it be otherwise? Look at power, at happiness and all the other objects of man's ambition; by a fatal law the price of their conquest is work; man gains nothing but by the sweat of his brow. Science is subject to this general rule; upon the most indifferent questions, as well as the most interesting problems, truth is a conquest, and it is only by force of investigations that we arrive at any discovery; and yet it is not the complete truth which we discover, but an imperfect truth, which increases from age to age without ever ending, which unceasingly excites the activity of the understanding, without having the power of pacifying it. Let us be resigned, gentlemen, and let us accept the lot of humanity without a murmur; let us do what all men have done before us, who sought the truth. We possess an intelligence to know it and a reason to combine the best means of discovery; let us make use of these means with patience and good sense, and if the whole truth must escape us, let us

at least try to come at the most complete truth possible.

The human reason, in its investigations, can arrive at two different results. Sometimes it succeeds in discovering the truth which it was in pursuit of; sometimes its efforts fail, it remains powerless. The true scientific spirit knows how to make profit out of this last result. In place of the truth which escapes him, he masters the difficulty which prevented him from attaining it, separating carefully in the question what is known from what is unknown, he states precisely the nature of this difficulty; he ascertains, in detail, the circumstances, the extent and the causes; he explores, in a word, the obstacle he could not pass over, and if he does not leave the problem solved, he at least renders to science the service of leaving it clearly expressed.

Often these investigations, which are purely negative in character, lead to a much more important result. In exploring the nature of the difficulty which it could not surmount, science discovers that the difficulty is insurmountable in itself. Then it is no longer the limit of the power of the individual which is met and marked, it is the limit of the power of our reason. This result is not less important than the discovery of truth itself. There are two ways, for a thinking man, of having a

tranquil soul and a calm spirit—the first is to possess the truth, or think that you possess it, on the questions interesting to humanity; the second is to recognize clearly that this truth is inaccessible, and to know the reason of it. We do not see humanity rebelling against the barriers which limit its power on all sides. Before the storms of heaven, the tempests of the ocean, the convulsions of nature, the narrow prison of this world, the maladies and sickness, humanity recognizes its weakness, and yields; and why? Because this weakness is demonstrated, and because the rebellion would be useless. The intelligence of man, although infinitely less restrained than his power, has also its limits, limits which it would in vain attempt to overleap. The facts which we can observe being limited, the inductions we can draw from these facts are also limited; science has its horizon, beyond which it cannot see; it belongs to it to mark this boundary little by little, as it is met. It is here, gentlemen, upon the extreme frontier of its domain, that science should be separated from poetry, which alone is privileged to go further; science must be separated, under the penalty of yielding its place; science owes it to humanity, to whom it has its mission of making known the truth to humanity, who have suffered too much for having expected it and sought for it,

where it was and where it will always be inaccessible.

The method to be followed, in order to solve these questions, is indicated by common sense. I have already pointed it out; these questions are not foreign to each other; a certain dependence unites them. If a certain dependence exists, it follows that the solution of one of them cannot be useless for that of another, and consequently, that it is not a matter of indifference whether we approach them in such or such order, in order to solve them. Now, there is a very simple way of discovering this dependence; it is to take each of these questions, one after the other, and after gaining a precise idea of the difficulty attached to it, to search for what we must know, in order to solve the difficulty. It is evident, that in proceeding in this way, we make clear all the relations of dependence which can exist between these questions, or in other words, all the ways in which each of them can presuppose the solution of all the others.

We shall follow this method, which is at once very simple and sure. The review will be brief, as all in it will be clear, and as in the former lecture, I noticed the greater part of these dependencies.

Among the problems which we have to examine, let us consider, in the first place, that which is the

object of the science called Natural Right or ethics. What is the design of this science? You know, gentlemen, that it is to ascertain the respective rights and duties of individuals living in society. Now, what must we know in order to solve this question? Let us try to determine. What has every man a right to do? He has undoubtedly the right to do everything indispensable to the accomplishment of the end for which he is in this world; in this, undoubtedly, is the source of right; it is because we have a certain destiny to accomplish, a certain end to attain in this world, that we have the right to do certain things. The end of man, then, in this world, must be previously determined; otherwise, it is impossible to tell what he has a right to do, and what no one has a right to prevent him from doing. Our duties come from the same source—right in others constitutes duty in us, and reciprocally; in other words, we ought to respect in them that which they have the right to do, that is, all the acts indispensable to the accomplishment of their destiny, and in their turn, they ought to respect in us all that is necessary for the accomplishment of our end, and as their end and ours are identical, it follows that there is a perfect identity between our rights and theirs, between their duties and ours; it is this which constitutes the moral and civil equality of all men.

We cannot, then, determine either the rights or duties of men united in society, unless we know the end of man. There is, therefore, a manifest dependence between the problem of ethics and the problem of man's destiny in this life; to solve the first, we must have solved the second; and the order in which these two problems should be approached, results immediately from this dependence.

Let us now turn our attention to another problem not less important—that which it is the aim of politics to solve. It is sufficient that the rights and duties of each one should be determined, in order to lay the foundations of society: for each one then knows what he can do in the association, and what he is bound to respect. But who will oblige individuals to follow these rules? Experience proves that among the members of an association, there is always a great number who endeavor to extend their rights to the detriment of others. From this comes, in every society, the necessity of a higher power, established by society, with the mission of causing the rights of each one to be respected by each individual. But this mission, purely negative, is not the only one which the political power has to fulfill. If society had no other effect than to place the rights of its members in contact, and consequently in hostility to each

other, it would be an evil rather than a good, and humanity would have cause to lament the possession of its desires and affections. But this is not the case. The principal and positive effect of an association is to increase the power of each of its members by the power of all the others, and consequently of rendering each individual infinitely more capable of advancing toward his end, than he is in a state of isolation. This effect is more or less perfectly produced, according as the association is more or less perfect, that is, according to the better or worse political organization of the society. A political institution has then a double end, the one negative, which is to cause the rights of each individual to be respected by the other; the other positive, which is to lead society to its end, that is, to make the forces of all coöperate as well as possible for good, or what comes to the same thing, for the accomplishment of the destiny of each one. What is the best possible government, or what is the political institution the best adapted to bring about this double result? Such is the problem which the science of politics has for its object to solve. The ideas which the solution of this problem presupposes, are not difficult to ascertain. It is evident that we must know what the rights of man in society are, in order to ascertain what is the political institution the best adapted to gua-

rantee to each one the exercise of these rights. In this relation, then, the political problem presupposes the solution of the problem of the law of nature or ethics, which in turn presupposes the solution of the problem of the destiny of man. Secondly, it is manifest that we must know the end of the individual, to know that of society, and the end of society, to determine what is the best political organization to conduct society to its end. If we are ignorant of the destiny of man in this world, the end of society, which is to smooth the way for each man in the accomplishment of his destiny, will escape us; and if the end of society is unknown to us, upon what data can we base our search for the best possible organization of society? Under the second relation, as under the first, the political problem presupposes the solution of the two problems of man's destiny and ethics; from which it follows that we cannot and ought not to approach the political problem, until we have solved the first two, and that it ought not to take rank in science until after them.

Now, gentlemen, as there exist relations between individuals, so there exist relations between societies; and as the science of ethics has for its aim the determining of the first, so the science of the *Law of Nations* has for its object the determining of the second. What are the rights which belong

to each society, and which all others ought to respect? Such is, in other words, the problem of the law of nations. It is clear that the reason a society has certain rights is that it has an end. If an individual had no destiny to accomplish, he would possess no right; for all his rights are resolved, in the last analysis, into the right of accomplishing the destiny imposed upon him by his nature. It is the same with those collective individualities called societies: it is because they have an end that they have certain rights; and with them, as with individuals, these rights are only and can only be the different consequences of the fundamental right of accomplishing this destiny. It follows from this that a society has the right of doing everything useful for the most perfect accomplishment possible of its end; and as this end is the same for all—for the smallest as well as the largest societies—the right belonging to one belongs to all, and imposes the same respect, and consequently the same duties upon all in respect to each. Here, as in social ethics, duty is the correlative of right: the extent of the one determines the extent of the other, and both are occasioned and measured by the end of the being to which they relate. We must then know the end of society to determine the rights and duties of societies. The problem of the ethics of nations presupposes then

the solution of the problem of politics; it is subordinate to it like a consequence to its principle.

We see realized, gentlemen, what we had foreseen; in seeking the necessary data for the solution of each problem, the dependencies existing between them are revealed; and as these dependencies become manifest, we see a hierarchy unveiling itself, and becoming established between these questions. The ethics of nations presupposes politics; politics presuppose ethics; and these three sciences themselves presuppose the solution of the problem of the destiny of man. This hierarchy of questions is the true order in which they should be approached. We see that so far all these questions spring from the problem of man's destiny, as from a common root. The rights and duties of individuals, the end of society, the best organization of the political power, the rules which ought to govern in the relation of nations—these all imply—these all presuppose the knowledge of man's destiny in this world: here is the light which should solve and make clear all these problems

The great problem of man's destiny, however, is not itself simple: it is subdivided, and has been subdivided in all times into several other problems. These subdivisions have their origin in two events which commence and terminate our present life—our birth and death. Man, like all other created

beings, having a certain nature, has also an end adapted to this nature. If the whole existence of man was inclosed within the limits of this life, it is evident that the whole destiny of man would be accomplished in this world. But does the existence of man really commence at the moment of his birth, does it really terminate at the moment of his death? These are two questions upon which it would not be wise to pronounce lightly. Thus, as we have said, it is at least doubtful whether birth is a true commencement, and death a true end. If the life of man commenced before the hour of his birth, and is to be prolonged after the hour of his death, his present would be but a fragment of his total life, and his destiny here would be but a chapter of his whole destiny: in other words, his destiny, like his existence, would not have, in this world, either its true beginning or true end; and the part which man performs on earth would be but the middle of a drama, the opening of which would have taken place in a former life, and the end to take place at a future period. Suppose the premises proved, the consequence is inevitable. But if the consequence is proved, the premises are likewise proved. Let us in fact admit that in examining the end which man accomplishes here, in this world, we recognize the fact that it is not sufficient for itself, that it is but a mutilated drama,

which wants either a beginning or an end, or both at once: does it not follow strictly, either that man has existed previously to the present life or that he will survive it, or both together? Undoubtedly, gentlemen. We have then two ways open to pass beyond the limits of the present life. Humanity has followed both, and the belief of humanity seems to testify that it has not done so uselessly. Without giving credit to this belief, it is sufficient that the doubt exists; it is sufficient that in regard to this doubt, life and death, the nature of man, and his present destiny can be interrogated and can give an answer; for science has no right to suppress, without examination, questions which the whole world ask themselves, and to declare *a priori* that the entire life, and, consequently, the entire destiny of man is inclosed between the cradle and tomb.

Man's destiny like his existence, and his existence like his destiny, can be divided into three distinct parts: one certain, which has for its limits birth and death, the other two possible beyond these two limits. The question of man's destiny in this world does not, therefore, embrace the whole problem of man's destiny; in addition to this first question, two others arise—has man existed before his appearance in this world, and if he has existed, what was his destiny in that former life? will man

live after death, and if he is to survive, what will be his destiny in this future life?

These last two questions belong to religion; the first belongs to morality properly so called; from the solution of these three questions results the solution of the general problem of man's destiny.

Such are, gentlemen, the elements of the problem of man's destiny. Now, there are two of these three questions into which it can be resolved, which manifestly presuppose the solution of the third. To learn if man has existed before this life, and will live after it, I have already said, gentlemen, that there are but two facts to interrogate—first his nature—secondly his destiny in this world. Let us suppose that his nature faithfully analyzed is sufficient to solve the question and answer it affirmatively: it will still remain to determine man's destiny in these two lives—the one before and the other after the present life. To penetrate into the mystery of these two portions of our destiny which are unknown to us, there is evidently but one way, this is to examine the portion which we can know, that is to say, the destiny which man accomplishes in this world. If man has existed previously to the present life and will survive it, the destiny accomplished by man in this world must want a true commencement and a true end. The commencement which we find is presupposed

by man's destiny here, and the end demanded is precisely the anterior and posterior destiny sought for. Thus even while supposing that the nature of man is sufficient to prove an anterior and posterior life, the problem of man's destiny, in these two lives, would always presuppose the knowledge of his destiny in this. For a still stronger reason would it suppose this knowledge, if the nature of man could not by itself make clear the question of the past and future life, and if we were obliged to have recourse to the destiny of man in this world to solve it. In every way, then, the religious problem and the two questions embraced by it, presuppose the solution of the moral problem, or the knowledge of man's destiny here. The religious problem is to be approached, then, only after the moral problem in the legitimate order of our investigations.

And now, gentlemen, if the destiny accomplished by man upon earth is not his whole destiny—if this destiny has, without the limits of this life, a commencement and a continuation which explain it—it follows that we cannot have a true understanding, not only of the whole destiny of man, but even of his present destiny, as long as we limit our investigations to the limits of the moral problem, and as long as we have not extended them to the problem of religion. Conse-

quently all the questions which presuppose the solution of the moral problem presuppose, also, the solution of the religious problem. It is for this reason, gentlemen, that I make natural ethics, politics and the ethics of nations subordinate to the religious problem. Undoubtedly these three sciences have nothing directly to do with the destiny of man out of this life; the destiny of man here is the only datum which they demand. But can we say that we possess this datum, is it possible for us to have a complete knowledge of man's destiny in this world when we know it alone, when we separate it from its antecedents and its consequents, when we do not see it in its place, between its past and future destiny, following after the one and preparatory to the other? No, gentlemen. Without religion, morality is not intelligible; and we cannot deduce natural ethics, politics and the ethics of nations from a morality which is not intelligible. Thus all the grand doctrines produced by these three problems, bear the mark of the religious opinions under the reign of which they were brought forth, and there is not a single grand religious doctrine which has not modified the thoughts of humanity upon these problems. The examination of the religious question precedes then the examination of these questions in our investigations: such is the place which reason

assigns it in the hierarchy of problems proposed by us.

I have said, gentlemen, that the question of man's destiny leads to that of the destiny of the species. The history of religions testifies to the intimate alliance of these two questions. We behold all religions associating together the solutions of the two problems, as if one could not make progress without the other in the thoughts of humanity. In addition to this experience of ages, our experience teaches us that we cannot meditate a long time upon ourselves, without thinking of the species of which we form a part—without asking ourselves the question whence it comes, toward what it is advancing, and where the revolutions which continually modify its condition have carried it or are leading it; in a word, what is the meaning and the plot of the long drama which it plays on this earth? I have already shown you that a strange anxiety is awakened even in the least cultivated minds, and that thus the question of the destiny of the species is not less human than the question of the destiny of the individual, in the train of which it appears constantly. We will not break, gentlemen, a connection so natural, and our investigations will go as far as the thoughts of humanity. The question of the destiny of the species will occupy our attention in turn; we will

assign it its proper place in the scientific order of the problems.

Undoubtedly, gentlemen, the history of humanity is the principal element in the solution of this problem. We can even strictly attempt to solve it with this element alone, and it is in this way that philosophers have constantly proceeded in modern times. Take the oldest nations recorded in history, find out their condition and the spirit which animated them, see what became of this spirit, what modifications this condition underwent in the nations inheriting it, continue the same labor from people to people up to the present time, and as the first nations are unknown to us, study, in order to fill up this gap, savage tribes, examine obscure traditions and the few monuments of the primitive period; then, from all the elements given by this vast labor, try to deduce the march of humanity, and from this progress the law governing it: this is what can be undertaken with erudition alone, and this is what has been attempted. But, gentlemen, although there is not a single one of these historical elements but what is useful, perhaps indispensable to the solution of the problem, I do not think that they alone can give it. By what do we comprehend the actions of our fellow beings? by the knowledge we have of ourselves: the motives operating in us reveal to us those which operate in

them; the secret of our conduct explains to us the enigma of theirs; the better we know each other the more perfect is the revelation; without this knowledge, their acts would be an unintelligible spectacle to us. The understanding of history is subject to the same law. Man, being the element of humanity, contains all the motives which can move humanity. The end of man being the aggregate of all these motives, man imposes his end upon the whole of humanity, as he imposes it upon each of the societies which make up humanity. In other words, the life of a society is nothing more than the striving after their end of the individuals composing it, and the life of humanity nothing more than the succession of these strivings. To comprehend the nature and result of each of these efforts, we must know the end of man and the end of society, which are the aim of these efforts. For if we are ignorant of the end, toward which societies aspire unceasingly without ever completely attaining it, we will never be able either to discern the meaning and the reach of their efforts, or appreciate the greater or less value of the results obtained; and we will read the history of each nation, without discovering in it the work of that people in the grand labor of humanity. If the nature and value of each one of the elements of this great labor escape us, how shall we be able

to seize the law according to which this labor has been accomplished up to the present time? And if the law according to which it was accomplished in the past is unknown to us, how shall we infer the law it will follow in the future? And how, finally, shall we rise to the general and whole law of this development—to the law of humanity that we are seeking—the solution of the problem which perplexes us, of the problem of the destiny of the species? If there is one thing clearer than the light of day, it is this, that the facts of history, such as simple erudition gives them, are not sufficient to solve the problem of the destiny of humanity; that, so long as we have not meditated profoundly upon the end of man and society, these facts remain veritable hieroglyphics of which we have not the key; that, finally, the problem which philosophy of history has for its aim to solve, presupposes the solution of all the problems which precede, and ought to come after them, in the legitimate order of our investigations.

Now, gentlemen, I see but one question left which is intimately connected with the grand problem occupying our thoughts: it is the theological question, which is like the finishing of a building, the design of which we are drawing. The same law of reason, which in being applied by turns to the individual, to society or the species, makes man

conceive that individuals, societies and the species are in this world for a certain end, in being applied to the universe, in the midst of which humanity is but a phenomenon, makes him conceive also that this universe has an end, and as a part cannot be contradictory to the whole, that the end of humanity must concur with this total end, that it must be but an element of it, and consequently must have in it its reason and final explanation. Thus by an irresistible tendency, thought rises from individual to social order, from social to human order, from human to universal order. There alone can it stop; because there alone it meets the final answer of the enigma which perplexes it, the final reason of the phenomena the meaning of which it seeks. But I err, gentlemen; it goes still further, and it must. Universal order is itself but a law, a supreme law, it is true, which sums up all the others, and which contains the final reason of all phenomena, but which, in the ontological order, is nothing more than a fact, and presupposes an intelligent being who has conceived and consequently realized it. In other words, universal order supposes a universal maker, of whom it is at once the thought and work. Human intelligence then ascends even to God, and there it finally rests, because there it finally discovers the source of that immense stream which the inflexible logic of principles governing it obliges it to ascend.

God found, the aspect of the universe changes: order becomes Providence, and the thousand branches of universal law become the thousand decrees of the divine will and wisdom. The human soul escapes joyfully from the rule of inflexible fatality, and submits with pleasure to the rule of the wisdom and goodness of God. The paternal relations of the Creator to the creature succeed the severe relations of the law and subject; and the supreme and final question, which was to learn the part played by the destiny of the human race in the whole destiny of the universe, clothed in more consoling forms, becomes that of learning what the designs of Providence are—that is, of a Being supremely wise for man—that is, for a being feeble by his power, but like Him and superior to all other beings by the gift of the intellect. Under this last form as well as the first, the theological problem presupposes all those which we have hitherto considered, and others still which it draws after it in the vast problem of man's destiny. In fact, to understand the part performed by the destiny of the human species in the whole destiny of the universe, we must start at the same time from the end toward which we see humanity advancing and the end toward which the part of the physical world we can observe seems to gravitate. The knowledge of the physical world is thus introduced as an element

into the question: it takes a place there by the side of the question of man and humanity: and these two sciences become the two data of the question of God, or what comes to the same thing, of the question of order and the universal end of all things. From the bosom of this extensive knowledge, and by a comparison of the physical with the moral order, the question of the superiority of one of these two orders, and consequently of the subordination of the other, arises, and is to be solved; reason, casting, by turns, nature and man into her scales, finds herself called upon to decide whether nature is made for man, or man is only a fragment of nature; whether nature is the theatre prepared for the drama of our destiny, or we are but a drop of water, carried along with a thousand others in the current of a stream whose depths and banks, source and end are unkown to us. A most important and difficult question, which is the same as the thought of God, and which aspires to nothing less than an understanding of the enigma, a question which leads us to consider all the data which the creation can give us, in order to draw from them all the signs possible of the providence of the Creator—a question which being superior to and summing up all the others, has been almost always proposed and agitated before them, but which being capable of solution only by the light of the united

solutions of all the others, ought not to be approached until after them in the legitimate order of science.

Such are, gentlemen, the questions which the general problem of human destiny embraces, and the rigorous order in which they ought to be approached and solved. You see that they are not independent and isolated, but that they are united and form a system like the branches of a tree, all of which, from the smallest to the largest, are directly or indirectly connected with the trunk that nourishes and supports them. The common trunk of the questions noticed by us, is the particular question of man's destiny in this life: far or near, directly or indirectly, all are connected with this, all presuppose its solution. This, gentlemen, is then the first question which science must strive to solve. It will be the first object of our investigations, and as it is extensive, it will be the subject of our lectures for the first year. Let us then forget the whole outline of the system we have just sketched, let us forget all the other problems which compose it, and let us concentrate our whole attention upon the moral problem, the only one which must hereafter occupy us.

In approaching this problem, we will remain faithful to the spirit which presides over these lectures. In the first place and before anything else

we will endeavor to understand perfectly the meaning of it, then we will consider the means existing, and determine the method which must be followed: finally, the goal ascertained and the route marked out, we will advance.

Three forms have been given to the moral problem since it has been discussed. The first is that under which I myself have placed it, "What is the destiny of man in this world?" The second is that which prevailed in the Greek schools, and which can be called its antique form: "What is the true or sovereign good for man?" The third is that which prevails in our time, and which has become its ordinary form: "What are man's duties, or what is the rule which ought to govern his conduct?" I will show you in a few words that these questions cover the same problem: in disengaging it from these three forms, I shall attain my first object, which is to establish its true meaning.

Evidently, gentlemen, if all things were indifferent to us, we would have no reason for acting in one way rather than another, and consequently we would have no reason for acting at all. In order to act, we must will to act; to act in one way rather than in another is to prefer; we could wish for nothing, we could prefer nothing, if our nature had been constituted in such a way that there was

nothing good or nothing preferable for it. Our nature acts because there is a good for it; it chooses because there is a good and an evil; if it is good for it to do certain things, and if it is bad for it to do certain other things, this arises also from the same reason. From which you see, gentlemen, there is no reason for our asking what is good for man to do, unless there is a good for him, and you see that the only way of learning what he is to do, is to determine in what consists this good. Then the question of learning whether there is a morality or a possible rule for our actions is precisely the same as learning whether there is a good and an evil for us: and the question of knowing what is this morality or this rule is precisely the same as knowing in what consist the good and evil for us. These two last questions are then but one and the same problem under different forms. Only, when we ask in what the good and evil consist for man, we propose the questions under a more profound form; for the rule being the consequence and the good the principle, we must, in order to establish the rule, have previously determined in what the good consists.

Now, gentlemen, if you wish to find out in what way things appear to us good or bad, or what our intellect means when it calls them so, you will perceive that the question, "*In what does good and*

evil consist?" is in turn identical with the other, "*What is our destiny in this world?*"

In fact, gentlemen, whatever case you choose to take, and in whatever situation you choose to place yourself, you will always find that if you call such a thing good and such a thing bad, it is because the first agrees with your nature—is in harmony with its end—while the second is repugnant to your nature, is in opposition to its true end. A common example will make you understand my meaning.

Is it not true, gentlemen, that if we had not been so organized as to feel a certain appetite called hunger, and another called thirst, everything assisting to satisfy these appetites would be absolutely indifferent to us? Is it not true that without the existence in us of these appetites, bread and water would be neither good nor bad for us? And would the act of drinking and the act of eating be called good, and would we have any cause for doing these acts, without the existence of these appetites? Certainly not. The final cause of the goodness of bread and water, the final reason of the name which we apply to the acts of drinking and eating is in the constitution of our nature, and in the agreement existing between its end on the one hand and these things and acts on the other: in other words, it is the property they possess of sat-

isfying certain tendencies of our nature, and of thus assisting in this relation the accomplishment of our end, which constitutes their goodness, and constitutes it exclusively. If you suppress these appetites in us, these same acts, these same things, would become completely indifferent to us; they would have no longer any character for us. But in this very hypothesis, if we knew that a certain being was endowed with these two appetites, although bread and water, and the act of eating and drinking, were entirely indifferent to us, we would not the less judge that these things and acts were good for this being, and we would call them so in relation to it.

What is true in this case, gentlemen, is true in all, and this trivial example reveals to you the fact that there exist good and evil for man and for every being. The reason that good and evil exist for a being is that it has received from God a certain nature, and with this nature a certain destiny, which is the consequence of it and to which it aspires. The accomplishment of this destiny is for a being, I will not say the supreme good, but the only good; the non-accomplishment is the only evil. All that is good for a being is so only for the reason that it contributes to this sole good; all that is bad is so for the reason that it contributes to this one evil. Therefore, to determine what is

good or bad for a being, we must have ascertained previously in what consist for it this supreme good and evil; that is to say, gentlemen, we must have previously ascertained what the end, what the destiny of this being is. From which you perceive that the question, *In what does evil and good consist for man—what is the true, the supreme good for him*—is precisely the same as, *What is the destiny of man in this world?* Only, of these two forms of the same problem, the last is the most profound; for we must know what the end of man in this world is to determine what is his good, as we have seen that we must know what his good is to determine what he must do, and thus ascertain the rule of his conduct.

You see, gentlemen, that in the final analysis the problem is the same as is expressed in the three questions we have just described; but it appears in them taken at different degrees of profoundness. Under whatever form the question may first be put, we must always, to solve it, end by bringing it back to the most profound, to that which clearly exposes the true difficulty. It is this, then, which is the true form—the scientific form of the problem; it is also under this form that we have proposed the question. The meaning of the problem being fixed, let us come to the method to be followed in order to solve it.

Two ways are open to us: one consists in searching for the solution of the question in the nature of man, the other in searching for it in the spectacle of human life which we have under our eyes. The last of these two ways is indirect, and strewed with uncertainties; the only prompt and sure method for learning the destiny of man, is to seek it by an exact analysis of the constituent principles of his nature.

And yet the last of these two methods does not seem, at first glance, to be the most natural; nor has it been the most commonly followed; in general the other has been preferred, on account of an argument apparently just, but which takes no account of the practical difficulties of the method for the support of which the argument is made.

The choice of its end does not depend at all upon a being: the end is imposed upon it by its nature, which it cannot change, and it aspires necessarily toward that end. Man cannot change his nature any more than any other being, and this nature cannot become unfaithful to its own principles any more than any other nature. Man is then inflexibly determined to tend toward his end; it is sufficient to prove toward what man is progressing, to learn his true end. That is the reasoning, gentlemen; the premises are correct, but two circumstances have not been attended to which will not

allow us to admit the consequence; the first is, that man is intelligent and free; the second is, that the end of man in practice is resolved into a multitude of particular ends, and the movement of human nature toward that end is resolved into a multitude of partial and different tendencies. Without these two circumstances, the method which pretends to find the end of man in the spectacle of human affairs would be successful; but these two circumstances render it blind and ineffectual, as you will readily understand by what follows.

The primitive tendencies through which human nature manifests its end, and aspires to it, are not very numerous; and when we study them directly in the sanctuary of the consciousness, where they act upon the will and determine the conduct, it is easy to separate them, and to comprehend the definite and total end toward which they conspire. This movement, however simple at its source, is broken by coming in contact with external things, and is separated into an infinite multitude of different pursuits. In fact, the world which surrounds us presents to each passion of our nature an infinity of different aims, and although the passion remains the same in the consciousness, it receives, from without, from this diversity of ends toward which it aspires, an infinite diversity of forms

which disguise it in a thousand ways, and transform it for the spectator into a multitude of distinct passions. Not only is the spectator, but the actor even is deceived; each of us, preoccupied with the particular good we are pursuing, takes the passion driving us on for a different one from that of our neighbor, in whom it aspires to a different end; it is thus that, for all of us, what is simple within—the demand of human nature—is transformed without into a variety of directions and pursuits which almost equals the number of the grains of sand on the seashore.

This is not all, gentlemen; while external things thus break the aim of our nature into a thousand fragments, our nature, because it is intelligent and free, neglects the whole for a part, and appears in each individual to attach itself exclusively to some of these fragments, and to forget the rest. Experience proves that man chooses among this multitude of particular aims, into which our end is separated externally, that this choice varies infinitely from individual to individual, and that often man makes an absurd choice, sacrificing the highest interests of his nature for petty ones. There are very few men, if any, that embrace the end of man in its whole meaning, and who pursue its entire accomplishment. Almost all are the slaves of a particular passion, taken up with an exclusive good; and in

the service of this passion, in the acquisition of this good, they waste all their activity, all their efforts, their whole life. Hence, gentlemen, the infinite diversity of opinions upon what deserves truly to occupy the thought and energy of man. Each individual has, so to speak, a particular opinion on this point, and each society has its own. If you survey the thousand different worlds which this great city contains, you will be amazed to see that what agitates and absorbs one, appears of little importance, or of no importance at all to another. Not only, then, does the end of man, simple within, appear divided externally into a multitude of particular aims, but by the exclusive and different choices of human liberty among these aims, it would seem that in place of a common end for us all, there were as many ends as individuals, and that each of us had our own.

These are the two circumstances, gentlemen, which, as I have already told you, render ineffectual the method, claiming to be able to deduce the end of man from the spectacle of human actions. Undoubtedly this method is correct when it supposes that the multitude of different directions into which the small number of the primitive tendencies of our nature branches out in the outer world, express like them the demand of our nature. All these directions in fact emanate from these tenden-

cies, which are only the different expressions of a single fundamental desire—the desire which carries our nature toward its end. But who does not see immediately that of these two translations, one direct and made up of a small number of signs, the other far-fetched and containing a multitude, it is absurd, when both are equally under our eyes, to neglect the first in order to question the second? And again, who does not understand that we cannot read the end of man through this last, except on the condition of tracing back all the different directions of the external life, to the small number of internal tendencies from which they emanate, and that thus, under penalty of not succeeding, the preferred method is finally obliged to demand the solution of the moral problem from that which was rejected?

In fact, gentlemen, and mark this well, when you have been successful, with an almost impossible accuracy, in gathering together all the different aims pursued by men in this world, you will still have only an aggregation of particular aims, and it will remain for you to reduce this immense list and to extract from all these particular ends the small number of principal ones of which they are the variations only. Now, this induction is only possible conditionally; the condition is that we neglect the external conduct of man and ques-

tion the motives of his conduct and the principles of his nature. Indeed, all these different courses in the outer world do not unite; it is only in the inner that they do so. Outwardly, the aims pursued are distinct, and the courses different; you will find nothing there which will warrant you in identifying them. But these different courses may be suggested within by the same passion, by the same principle of our nature, so that, notwithstanding the difference of the external aims, they may have only one and the same end: in this way courses the most diverse in appearance may yet be identical. But where are these identities revealed? They are revealed in what constitutes them, that is, in the principles of our nature. You cannot then pronounce upon the identity or the difference of two courses except by the knowledge itself of the fact which you claim to deduce from them: that is, from the motive which has determined them. This method is, therefore a circle, since it supposes that which we are trying to discover. And this is so true, that an action can be produced by the most opposite motives, without ceasing to be the same. The maxims of La Rochefoucauld are a striking proof. Take all possible actions—take them as they are and such as they appear to a spectator; La Rochefoucauld takes upon himself to prove that there is not one, not even those which

appear to be the most generous, that cannot be explained by a personal motive, and in fact that there is no action whatever that cannot be produced by such a motive. But does it follow that they are never produced by a disinterested motive? Certainly not: they are produced sometimes by a disinterested, sometimes by a personal motive. And how, in a given case, can we learn by which of the two they are produced? They themselves cannot teach us: it is the secret of the conscience which performs them. If we confine ourselves to questioning human actions, we can never arrive at anything certain in regard to the motives which determine them, nor consequently in regard to the true ends of human conduct: they lend themselves with the same facility to the most different interpretations, and justify with the same ease the most opposite systems. It is then impossible to deduce the solution of the problem of human destiny from the spectacle of human actions. We must therefore search elsewhere the revelation of this destiny; we must seek it where it is written in fixed and certain characters; that is, in the constituent principles of human nature.

This question, presupposed by all those that are to occupy our attention—this fundamental question of the destiny of man in this world—presupposes itself a still more fundamental one: the

question of the nature of man. He who is ignorant of the nature of man cannot solve the question; he who knows but imperfectly this nature, can only find an incomplete solution: this is not merely true; it can be strictly proved. For, the question of man's destiny in this world is not a question of fact—a question which observation can immediately solve. That man has an end in this world, reason conceives necessarily; but this end is not an observable fact, which falls under the consciousness and senses; it is nothing more than a general idea to be made definite, which can be done only through facts. So long as we have not reached a question of facts in an investigation, we have not discovered the true beginning. We cannot guess at the designs of God, which are the laws of the creation; we must discover them, and we can only discover them by the study of the small portion of his works which he permits to our observation. All light issues from our observation, and every search, unless it be impossible, conceals in its bosom a question of fact by which it can be solved. The genius of method, which is the genius of science, consists entirely in discovering this question, in expressing it as a problem. That done, all is done: for the outline is sketched, and human patience goes on perfecting it by filling up the outline. In the inquiry occupying us, this

question of fact is that of man's nature. The nature of man is a thing that can be observed, a reality which exists and is present to our sight. To ascertain it, we have no need of any anterior data; it is sufficient to open the eyes of consciousness and observe. We now recognize a question which is truly the first; we have now arrived at the true beginning of our inquiry. Man being known, the determination of his end follows: his end ascertained, determines the end of society and the species: and the end of humanity determined, the place of humanity in the work of creation can be legitimately sought. This is the outline of science, gentlemen—its strict and true outline. It is this outline which we shall endeavor to fill up.

LECTURE III.

THE MORAL FACTS OF HUMAN NATURE.

Gentlemen, there is but one duty for man—the duty of accomplishing his destiny—the duty of proceeding to his end. The end of man being given, the supreme rule of his conduct is also given. This is true, but what is also true is that the situations in which man can be placed are so numerous and so different, that it is not always easy for him to see how he should act in each of them, in order to accomplish this supreme duty.

We have seen in the former lecture that the object of ethics or natural right is to find out the rules of human conduct; that thus in its most comprehensive meaning, this science embraces all the rules which ought to direct man in this life.

Before commencing our investigations, however, there is a previous question that I must examine and solve—it is, does there really exist a science of ethics? Some philosophical systems, as you know, have attempted to prove that there are no obligatory rules for man, and that morality is reduced to

counsels of prudence, which man can follow or neglect at his own peril.

As such systems deny ethics, or at least change it so much that they take away its true character, and in that way, destroy its great importance, it seemed to me necessary, before entering into the science itself, to find out if the fact upon which it is founded exists, and to criticise the numerous systems which deny the fact or change it essentially. This question, as you perceive, must precede all those which are the object of the present course; the question is, besides, of the highest importance, for it is nothing less than the knowledge of the fact that there exists for man some obligatory rule of human conduct. The existence of duty, and consequently the existence of right, is implied in this question, which the profoundest minds in philosophy, in politics and legislation have discussed.

To discuss the question before you, I have hesitated between two methods. I was in doubt whether it would be best to present these systems to you, and to refute them one after the other, and then exhibit to you the facts of human nature which they have changed or not recognized; or whether it would not be best, by sacrificing for the sake of clearness, whatever of advantage the application of this method might have, to commence by

giving to you, in the first place, a description of the moral facts of human nature, in order that you might test, by the light of these facts, the different views which have resulted in different conclusions.

I chose the last method. Notwithstanding all my efforts to make you understand the principle and tendency of each of these systems, I would be fearful of not succeeding, if I had not in the first place exhibited to you the moral facts of human nature—the common origin from which all systems of ethics draw their principles and their point of departure. I will commence, then, gentlemen, with a description as exact as possible of the principal moral facts of human nature. When you understand this description, I will then be able to proceed to an explanation of the systems we are to criticise; and comparing the systems with facts, I shall be able to point out which of the facts have been neglected, which have been adopted, and to show thus both the point of departure of each, and what is true and false in each. In this way, you will understand more readily each of those systems, and the refutation of them will also be easier for me.

I will, therefore, devote this lecture to an explanation of the moral facts of human nature in their principal circumstances.

One being is distinguished from another by its

organization. This is what distinguishes a plant from an animal, an animal of one species from that of another. Each being has then its own peculiar nature; and because it has its own peculiar nature, it is predestined by this nature to a certain end. If, for instance, the end of the bee is not the same as that of the lion, and if the lion's is not the same as man's, we can only understand the reason of it in the difference of their natures. Each being is, therefore, organized for a certain end in such a way that if we knew its nature completely, we could deduce its destination or end. The end of a being is what is called the good of the being. There is thus an absolute identity between the good of a being and its end. The good of a being is the accomplishment of its end, the reaching the object for which it was organized.

As every being, because it is organized in a certain way, has, by virtue of this organization, a special end which is its good, so there is not a single being which is not endowed with a certain number of faculties, by means of which it can attain its end. In fact, as there results from the very constitution of a being a certain end for it, there would be a contradiction, if nature, while giving such an organization to the being for the accomplishment of its good, had not at the same time bestowed some faculties, which would render

it capable of reaching the end. Such a truth is necessary in the eyes of reason, and needs no verification by experience. It can, however, always be verified, if we will examine the nature of each being, the end imposed upon it, and the faculties given for reaching the end. We cannot find a single exception to the principles which I have just laid down.

From these principles, it results that man, having a particular organization, has necessarily an end, the accomplishment of which is his good, and that being organized for this end, he has also necessarily the faculties indispensable for the accomplishment of the end.

From the first moment of the existence of an organized being (and it is the same with beings not organized, although not so apparent), from the moment, I repeat, of its existence, its nature tends toward the end for which it has been constituted. From this fact result certain movements in the being, which, independently of all reflection, independently of all calculation, carry it to a certain number of particular ends, all of which, taken together, make up the total end of the being. These instinctive movements, which even in reasonable creatures possess not the slightest trace of deliberation, and which are manifested in man as soon as he is born, and are developed more and

more intensely as he grows older, I call the *primitive and instinctive tendencies of human nature.*

Thus from the fact of the existence of man, there takes place in him what takes place in all possible beings, that is, in virtue of his organization, his nature aspires to its end by movements which later are called the passions, and which carry him irresistibly toward this end.

At the same time that the instinctive tendencies are developed in man, which impel him toward his end or good, the faculties given him by God for its attainment are put in motion under the influence of these tendencies, and endeavor to seize the objects toward which they bear him. As soon as man exists, then, there spring up in him, on the one hand, the tendencies which are the expression of his nature; on the other hand, the faculties given him for satisfying these tendencies. This is not the beginning of human life only, it is its foundation; as long as life lasts, it exists on this foundation, which never changes, no matter what other phenomena appear.

I think that I proved clearly, in the preceding lectures, that when these faculties, placed in us for the purpose of realizing the end to which the tendencies of our nature aspire, awake and are developed for the first time, they are developed

in an indeterminate manner, and without a fixed direction.

That which in truth causes our faculties to concentrate themselve in order to gain their object, is the fact that in this life, such as it is, they meet with obstacles which do not permit them to reach it in any other way. I have already told you that if this world was the harmony of the forces of all beings composing the world, if all these forces, instead of counteracting each other, were developed equally and harmoniously, it would be sufficient for them to be developed merely, to reach their end without effort. But such is not the organization of this world, as you know; we can define it rather as the place where all destinies meet in opposition, and consequently, where all the forces of the beings composing the world oppose each other

It is the same with our nature as with every other; while being developed in order to attain its end, it meets with obstacles which arrest it and impede it in its progress. To make you understand more readily the fact that I have just mentioned, I will take, as an example, one of the faculties of our nature—intelligence—which is charged with the satisfaction of our instinctive desire of knowledge.

The intelligence, as you know, does not imme-

diately discover the truth which it seeks. On the contrary, it meets with difficulties, uncertainties, darkness, in a word, obstacles of every kind, which prevent it from attaining the truth. Now, gentlemen, what happens when the intelligence, while developing itself thus primitively, sees nothing at all of what it is constituted to see? It happens that spontaneously it rouses itself to overcome the obscurities which it meets with—the difficulties which oppose its reaching its object. This effort is nothing less than the concentration, upon a single point, of the forces of the understanding previously dispersed. When the understanding is developed instinctively, it is not concentrated upon one point more than another, it pays attention to all equally; it rays out, so to speak, in all the senses. Meeting, however, darkness on every side, it expends its whole strength successively upon each thing which is obscure. This phenomenon takes place spontaneously, and it is a matter of great importance for morality to establish the fact; for this spontaneous movement is the first sign of the power which exists in us of directing our faculties—in other words, the first manifestation of our will. Now, gentlemen, this concentration of the human force is an effort unnatural to man. Human nature, therefore, suffers every time it is obliged to make this concentration. Even now, with our

faculties so disciplined and so exercised, it is always a very fatiguing thing for us to direct our faculties and to concentrate them perseveringly upon such or such a point. It is not, in fact, their primitive and natural way; it is an exceptional way to which we are condemned by the condition of humanity. Therefore, after every effort of this kind, human nature returns with pleasure to the indeterminate development which is its natural mode of action; to return to this mode is a repose for our nature. In human life, and especially in the primitive life of man, before reason has appeared, our faculties are developed alternately between these two methods: the indeterminate or natural method, and the concentrated or voluntary method. It is sufficient for me now to mention the fact merely; later I shall draw important consequences from it. Another fact which it is not less important to notice, is, that no matter what efforts our faculties may make to satisfy the primitive tendencies of our nature, and to make our nature enjoy the good to which it aspires, these efforts can never give more than a very incomplete satisfaction—that is, a very imperfect good; such is the law of this life, that man can never triumph over the hard conditions imposed on him. In this life, then, the complete satisfaction of our tendencies—the complete good—does not exist.

When our faculties, being exercised, succeed in satisfying our tendencies, in acquiring for our nature a part of the good to which it aspires, a phenomenon is produced in us called pleasure. The privation of good, or the check which our faculties experience when they pursue but are unable to attain it, produces in us another phenomenon called pain. Pleasure and pain are produced in us, because we are not only active, but also sensitive. It is, in fact, because we are sensitive, that our nature rejoices or suffers, according as it succeeds or fails in the pursuit of good.

We can readily imagine a nature active without being sensitive; for such a being, there would always be an end—a good—tendencies bearing it toward this good—faculties rendering it capable of attaining the good, sometimes fortunate, sometimes unfortunate in the pursuit, but without the feeling of pleasure or pain. Such is the origin and the true character of pleasure and pain; and you perceive that these two phenomena are subordinate to good and evil. I beg of you to notice this particularly, as good has often been confounded with pleasure, and evil with pain. They are entirely distinct. Good and evil are the success and failure in the pursuit of the ends to which our nature aspires: we could obtain the one and experience the other without there being either

pleasure or pain; it would be enough if we were not sensitive. But as we are sensitive, it is impossible for our nature not to rejoice when it succeeds in attaining that which is good for it, or not to suffer when it cannot attain it; it is a law of our organization. Pleasure is then the consequence, and the sign of the realization of good in us; pain the consequence and the sign of the privation of good. But the one is not more the good than the other is the evil.

As every human being aspires to his good, rejoices when he attains it, suffers when he is deprived of it, he must love, must seek for everything which, without being his good, contributes to procure it for him, and feel an aversion for everything which prevents him from attaining his good. This is the reason that when our faculties, in the process of their development, meet with obstacles which assist or counteract their efforts, we experience for the former feelings of affection and love, and for the others aversion and hatred. From this it happens that our tendencies, that is, the great, the true passions of human nature, branch out, so to speak, while in the process of accomplishing their end, and are subdivided into a multitude of particular tendencies, also called the passions, but which we must distinguish carefully from the primitive passions which are developed in

us by themselves, and independently of every external object, from the mere fact of our existence, and which aspire to their end before reason has disclosed to us what this end is. The passions, on the other hand, which I call secondary, spring up in us only on meeting with external objects, which, while assisting or opposing the development of our primitive passions, excite them in us. We call the objects which assist our primitive tendencies *useful*, and those that oppose them *hurtful*. Such is the origin of the secondary passions and the ideas of the *useful* and *hurtful*.

Some of our tendencies, as for instance sympathy, make us feel kindly disposed toward others; other tendencies do not, as for instance curiosity, or the desire of knowledge, and ambition or the love of power. In fact, although it is true that in infancy, and before reason reveals to us our own nature, all our tendencies are developed without our reflecting upon ourselves—that is, without egotism—yet some have no other result than our own satisfaction, our own good, while sympathy has for its aim not only our own good, but also the good of others: for it is important to remark that if we wish well to others when reason intervenes at a later period, it is not only by virtue of reason, it is also by virtue of one of our tendencies—sympathy—which, independently of all idea of duty

and of all calculation of interest, impels us to wish the good of others as its proper end. The principle is personal, but the object toward which it aspires spontaneously is the good of others. Thus, even when there are only instinctive movements in man, he still has a kindly feeling for others.

All the facts that I have so far presented to you, constitute the primitive state of man—infancy. When reason appears, it causes this primitive state to experience successively two transformations, from which result two other moral states entirely distinct. Before passing to a description of these two other states, let us review, briefly, the constituent elements of the first. I have already told you that at the very commencement of life, certain tendencies are developed in man, and manifest the end for which he was created; that at the same time are also awakened certain faculties designed to satisfy these tendencies; that the development of these faculties is in the first place naturally indeterminate, but that the obstacles which they meet with arouse them accidentally to a concentration, which is the first manifestation or the first step of voluntary development. You have seen that human nature, being sensitive, experiences pleasure when its tendencies are satisfied, and pain when they are not; that, besides, it loves that which assists the development of our tendencies,

and feels aversion for that which opposes them; thus our primitive passions branch out into a multitude of secondary passions, like the branches of a tree. Such are the elements of the primitive state. The characteristic of this state, the distinguishing mark, is the exclusive dominion of passion. Undoubtedly there is in the fact of concentration a commencement of self-control, and a commencement of a direction of our faculties by our personal power; but this power is still blind, and remains exclusively devoted to the service of the passion, which determines fatally the action and direction of our faculties. This is the case, until reason appears. It is the reason which withdraws the power or will of man from the exclusive dominion of the passions; before reason awakes, the present passion, and among the present passions that which is the strongest, drags the will along with it, because man has as yet no foreknowledge of future ill. Thus the triumph of the present passion over the future passion, and among the present passions the triumph of the strongest is, in the first state, the law of human determinations. The will exists, but there is as yet no liberty.

We have already power over our faculties, but we cannot as yet make use of them freely. Let us examine now what transformation the reason, when

appearing, causes this primitive state to undergo—the state of infancy.

The reason, in its simplest definition, is the faculty of comprehending, which must not be confounded with the faculty of knowing. In fact, animals know, but they do not seem to comprehend, and it is this which distinguishes them from man. If they understood, they would be like us; and instead of remaining during their whole lives, as they do, in the state we have just described, they would elevate themselves successively, like man, to the two other states which the intervention of reason produces in us.

When reason awakes in man, it finds human nature in full development, all its tendencies in play, all its faculties in activity. By virtue of its nature, that is, by the power which it possesses of comprehending, it soon finds out the meaning of the spectacle presented to it. In the first place, it comprehends that all these tendencies, that all these faculties aspire and advance only to one and the same end, to a total end, so to speak, which is the satisfaction of human nature. This satisfaction of our nature, which is the sum and resultant of the satisfaction of all of these tendencies, is then its true end—its true good. It is to this good that it aspires through all its passions; it is to this good that it endeavors to attain through all its faculties.

This is what the reason comprehends, and in this way it forms the general idea of good; and although this good, the idea of which we thus obtain, is still only our particular good, it is not the less a great advance beyond the primitive state, in which this idea does not exist at all.

Observation and experience of what is perpetually passing in us make our reason understand also that the complete satisfaction of human nature is impossible, and that, consequently, to count upon a complete good, is an illusion; that therefore we can and ought to expect only the greatest good possible—that is, the greatest satisfaction possible of our nature. Reason rises, then, from the idea of our good, to the idea of our greatest possible good.

Reason soon conceives also that everything which can lead us to the greatest good, is good from that fact alone, and everything that can turn us from it is bad; but it never confounds this double property, which it meets with in certain objects, with good itself and evil itself—that is, with the satisfaction or non-satisfaction of our nature. It distinguishes clearly good in itself from those things which are adapted to produce it, and by generalizing the common property of those things, it rises to the general idea of the *useful*.

It distinguishes also the satisfaction and non-sat-

isfaction of the tendencies of our nature from the agreeable and disagreeable sensations which accompany it in our sensibility, and pleasure is for it a different thing from good or the useful, and pain a different thing from evil or the hurtful; and, as it created the general idea of good and the idea of the useful, by summing up what there is of common in all the agreeable sensations, it creates the general idea of happiness.

Thus we have *good*, the *useful*, *happiness*—three ideas which the reason deduces immediately from the spectacle of our nature, and which are perfectly distinct in all languages, because all languages are made by the common sense, which is the truest expression of the reason. From that moment man possesses the secret of what passes within him. Up to that time man had lived without understanding himself; on that day he gains this knowledge. He sees whence these passions spring and what they demand; he knows how these faculties are determined, for what purposes they are useful, and what they do; he knows why he loves and why he hates that which he loves and hates; he knows why he experiences pleasure and pain from that which gives him pleasure and pain: everything becomes clear to him, and he owes it to reason.

But reason does not stop here; it comprehends also that in the condition to which man is actually

subjected, the empire over oneself, or the government of man over his faculties or the forces within him, is the condition without which he cannot reach the greatest possible satisfaction of his nature.

Indeed, so long as our faculties are abandoned to the impulse of the passions, they obey always the passion actually dominant, which has a double disadvantage. In the first place, nothing being more variable than passion, the dominion of one passion is soon replaced by that of another, so that under the rule of the passions, there is no possible regular sequence in the action of our faculties, and nothing great can be produced. Secondly, the good which results from the passion actually dominant is often the cause of a great evil, and the evil which might result from its non-satisfaction might often be the principle of a great good, so that nothing is less adapted to produce our greatest good than the government of our faculties by the passions. Reason soon discovers this, and concludes that to reach our greatest possible good, it would be better that the human energy should not remain a prey to the mechanical impulse of the passions. That in place of being hurried away by their impulse to satisfy at each moment the passion actually dominant, it would be better for our energy to be freed from this impulse, and directed exclusively to the

realization of self-interest well understood of the whole of all these passions—that is to say, of the greatest good of our nature. Now this better thing which our reason conceives, our reason conceives also that it is in our power to realize. It depends upon ourselves to estimate the greatest good of our nature; it is sufficient for us to employ our reason for this purpose; and it depends also upon us to gain the mastery over our faculties and to subject them to the service of this idea of our reason. For we possess this power; it was revealed to us and we perceived it in the spontaneous effort by which, in order to satisfy the passion, we concentrated upon a single point all the forces of our faculties. As soon as we do voluntarily what we have done already spontaneously, the power of the will is created. At the very moment that this great revolution is conceived, it is accomplished. A new principle of action is created in us—interest well understood, a principle which is no longer a passion, but an idea, which does not spring blindly and instinctively from the conditions of our nature, but which proceeds intelligibly and reasonably from the reflections of our reason; a principle no longer an impulse, but a motive. Finding support in this motive, the natural power we have over our faculties takes possession of these faculties, and striving to govern them according to the dir ction

of this motive, begins to be independent of the passions, to develop itself and gather strength. From that moment human energy is withdrawn from the inconsistent, variable and stormy empire of the passions, and subjected to the law of reason, calculating the greatest possible satisfaction of our tendencies—that is, our greatest good; that is, again, the interest well understood of our nature.

Such is, gentlemen, the new moral state, or the new mode of determination which the appearance of reason produces in man. Interest well understood, substituted for the partial ends to which our passions carry us, is the end, self-control, the means. What is changed from the first state, is the direct dominion of the passions over the human faculties. Between these two powers a third intervenes, the power of the reason and the will, the one laying down an end to the conduct, the other directing the human faculties toward this end.

You must not suppose, gentlemen, that after this revolution is accomplished in us by the reason, the direction of human energy placed in the hands of reason finds no support from passion. The reverse of this is true. The day on which our reason has completely understood the inconsistency of satisfying all our passions—and in each moment the strongest passion—the day on which it has conceived interest well understood,

the necessity of calculating it, and the necessity of preferring it in each case to the satisfaction of our particular passions—on that day our nature, by virtue of its own laws, attaches itself passionately to this system of conduct, which appears to it to be a means of reaching its end as it attaches itself passionately to everything that is useful; it loves this system of conduct, it deviates from it with regret, and feels an aversion for everything which turns it from it. Thus passion supports the government of human power by interest well understood, and there is under this relation, in the second state, an harmonious action between the element of passion and the rational element. But this harmony is far from being complete; for, the idea of our greatest good, conceived by reason, does not suppress the instinctive tendencies of our nature: they subsist, because they are imperishable; they are developed, they act, they demand their immediate satisfaction, as they did before, and they endeavor to drag the strength of our faculties to this immediate satisfaction, and they succeed very often. If interest well understood discovers sympathy in passion, it also finds in it many obstacles to overcome. Human power is thus very far from being entirely withdrawn from the immediate action of the passions in the second state. They often come, especially in weak

minds, to trouble the calculating rule of interest well understood. In a word, when reason has come, when it has risen to the idea of interest well understood, a new moral state, a new mode of determination is created; but it does not exist without returning to the primitive mode. Man fluctuates between these two modes, going from one to the other, sometimes resisting the impulse of the passions and yielding obedience to interest well understood, and sometimes yielding to the force of this impulse. But a new mode of determination is also created in us and introduced into human life.

This new moral state, or this new mode of determination, is the egotistical state or mode. In fact, that which constitutes egotism is the knowledge we possess that, when acting we are acting for our own peculiar good. Now, this knowledge does not exist in the primitive state; and for this reason the infant is not egotistical. In the infant, the instinctive tendencies of nature rule without control; each of these tendencies aspires to its own peculiar end, as to its highest aim; the infant sees these aims, loves them, endeavors to reach them; but he sees nothing beyond. In fact, all these passions aspire definitively to the satisfaction of his nature; but the infant is not a participant in this tendency; he is not, therefore egotistical or selfish in the true acceptation of the word. He is as innocent as

Psyche, who loves without knowing what love is. Reason in man is the torch of Psyche. It is reason alone which reveals to him the highest end of his passions, and, by revealing it to him, puts it as a reasonable motive of conduct, in the place of the fickle passions which before directed him: it is reason alone which creates egotism, or selfishness, in him; it is impossible, it cannot exist in the primitive state

We have not as yet, gentlemen, reached that state which particularly and truly deserves the name of the moral state. This state is the result of a new discovery made by the reason, of a discovery which elevates man from the general ideas, that produced the egotistical or selfish state, to universal and absolute ideas.

This new step, gentlemen, is not taken by the morality of selfishness. The selfish morality stops at egotism. To take this step, is to leap over the immense interval which separates selfish from disinterested morality. This is the way, gentlemen, that the transition in man from the second state that I have just described, to the state properly called the moral state, takes place.

There is, gentlemen, a vicious circle hidden in the mode of egotistical determination. Egotism or selfishness calls *good* the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature; and when we inquire why

the satisfaction of these tendencies of our nature is our good, the answer is, it is so because it is the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature. It is in vain, that in order to escape from this vicious circle, egotism seeks in the pleasure consequent upon the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature, the reason of the equation which it establishes between this satisfaction and our good; reason finds no weightier evidence in the equation of pleasure and good, than in the equation of the satisfaction of our nature and good, and the reason of this last equation always seems to it a mystery. It is this mystery, gentlemen, which drives the reason to take another step in moral conceptions. Leaving the exclusive consideration of individual phenomena, reason conceives that what takes place in us, takes place in all possible creatures; that all having a peculiar nature, all aspire by virtue of this nature to a peculiar end, which is also their good, and that each of these different ends is an element of a total and final end which comprehends them all, of an end which is the end of the creation, of an end which is universal order, and the realization of which alone merits, in the eye of reason, the title of good, alone fills up the idea of it, and alone forms with this idea a self-evident equation that needs no proof. When the reason has risen to this conception, then and only then does it

possess the idea of good; before, it had it not. Reason had, through a confused feeling, applied this name to the satisfaction of our nature, but was unable to account for the application nor to justify it. By the light of this new discovery, this application becomes clear and legitimate. Good—true good—good in itself—absolute good, is the realization of the absolute end of the creation, is universal order. The end of each element of the creation—that is, of each being, is an element of this absolute end. Each being, then, aspires to this absolute end while aspiring to its own end; and this universal aspiration is the universal life of the creation. The realization of the end of each being is then an element of the realization of the end of the creation—that is, of universal order. The good of each being is then a fragment of absolute good; and it is for this reason that the good of each being is a good; it is from this that this character comes; and if absolute good is to be respected, and if it is to be held sacred by the reason, the good of each being, the realization of the end of each being, the accomplishment of the destiny of each being, the development of the nature of each being, the satisfaction of the tendencies of each being—all things identical and which make but one—are equally sacred and to be respected.

Now, gentlemen, as soon as the idea of order

is conceived by our reason, there arises between our reason and this idea a sympathy so profound, so true, so immediate, that our reason prostrates itself before this idea, it recognizes it as sacred and obligatory, it adores it as its lawful sovereign, it honors it and submits to it as its natural and eternal law. To violate order, is an indignity in the eye of reason ; to realize order, as far as is permitted to our weakness, is good, is beautiful. A new mode of acting has appeared—a new rule truly a rule—a new law truly a law—a motive—a rule—a law that is lawful by itself, that obliges immediately, that has no need, in order to make itself respected and recognized, to invoke anything extraneous to itself, anything anterior or superior to itself.

To deny that there is for us, who are reasonable beings, anything holy, sacred or obligatory, is to deny one of two things, either that human reason does not rise to the idea of good in itself—of universal order, or that after conceiving this idea, our reason does not bend before it and feel immediately that it has met its true law, which it had not before perceived : two facts equally impossible to disown or to contest.

This idea—this law—is luminous and fruitful. By showing us that the end of each creature is an element of universal order, it stamps upon the end

of each being and upon the instinctive tendencies by which each being aspires to its end, a character to be respected and held sacred, which they did not possess before. Up to that time we were determined to the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature by the impulse itself of these tendencies or by the attraction of pleasure which follows this satisfaction; reason was able to judge the satisfaction fit, useful, agreeable: it was able in this way to calculate the means of obtaining the satisfaction; but whether it was legitimate—good in itself—whether it was or was not our duty to pursue it, our right to obtain it, our reason was wholly ignorant. The right and duty of proceeding to our end, which is our good, appear to us only on that day when our end appears to us as an element of universal order, and our good as a fragment of absolute good. That day clothes them with the characters of legitimacy, and of absolute goodness which our good did not possess; but our end is not alone clothed with these characters; the good, the end, of each being is clothed at the same time with the same characters. Before this, we could readily conceive that other beings have also tendencies to satisfy, and that consequently there is a good for them as for us; impelled by sympathy, we could readily desire instinctively their good, find pleasure in doing them good, and consequently, cause the

production of this good to enter into the calculations of our selfishness. But our reason could not decide nor even conceive that it was good and lawful for them to attain this good, and that, therefore, this good ought, to a certain extent, to be respected and held sacred by us. But when the idea of absolute good is conceived, that which was invisible appears, and the good of others becomes sacred to us at the same time and for the same reason as our own—that is, as an equal element of one and the same thing, order, which alone is to be respected and held sacred for itself. Thus, at the very same time, the character is attached to the good of others, and to our own good the character which makes them obligatory. There is no longer any difference between the duty of accomplishing the one and the duty of respecting and of assisting to accomplish the other; both are lost and confounded in the bosom of absolute good, which, being obligatory by itself, communicates to them, to the same degree, the legitimacy which exists in it.

All duty, all right, all obligation, all morality, flow, then, from one and the same source, which is the idea of good in itself—the idea of order. If you suppress this idea, there is no longer anything sacred in itself for reason, consequently, no longer anything obligatory, consequently, no longer any

difference of morality between the aims that we can pursue, between the acts that we can do; the creation is unintelligible, and all destiny is an enigma. If you restore this idea, everything becomes clear in the universe and in man; there is an end for every and each thing; there is a sacred order which every reasonable creature ought to respect and assist in accomplishing in itself and out of itself; thence come duties, rights, a morality, a natural legislation of human conduct. Such are, gentlemen, the consequences that the conception of order or of good in itself draws after it in human nature.

But this idea of order itself, although so lofty, is not the limit of human thought; human thought makes another step, and rises to God, who has established this universal order, and who has given to each creature concurring in this order, its constitution, and consequently its end and good. Thus, connected with His eternal being, order leaves its metaphysical abstractions, and becomes the expression of the divine thought; from this time, too, morality shows its religious side. But there was no need of its showing this side to be obligatory, for, the relation existing between our reason and the idea of order exists independently of all religious thought. Only when God appears as the substance of order, if I can so speak, as the will

which has established it, as the intelligence that has thought it, religious submission is united to moral submission, and by this also order has an additional claim to be respected.

Again, in infancy and a long time before the developed reason has risen to the idea of order, we feel sympathy, a love for everything possessing the character of beauty, antipathy and aversion for everything possessing the character of ugliness. Now, a profound analysis proves that beauty and ugliness are nothing else than the expression—the material symbol—of order and disorder. This double feeling, then, can only arise from the confused conception of the idea of order; it can only be the effect of that profound sympathy which unites whatever is most elevated in our nature with this grand idea. Later, when we have clearly conceived this idea, we can account perfectly for the instinctive feeling which makes us love the beautiful, and the powerful influence it exercises over our souls; and the beautiful is then to our eyes but one of the faces of good. It is the same with the true as with the beautiful? the true is order *thought*, as the beautiful is order *expressed*. In other words, absolute truth, the complete truth that we conceive in God, and of which we possess only fragments, is only and can be only the ideal—the eternal laws of this order—to the realization of

which all creatures gravitate fatally, and to which the beings who are reasonable and free are called to concur freely. So that this same order, which so far as it is the end of the creation is good, which so far as it is expressed by the symbol of the creation, is the beautiful, translated ideally in the thought of God or of man, is nothing else than the true. Good, the beautiful, the true, are then but order under three different aspects, and order itself is nothing else than the thought, the will, the development, the manifestation, of God. But let us not lose ourselves in these lofty views, gentlemen, and let us return to our subject.

When we have conceived the idea of order and the obligation that is imposed on our nature of realizing it as far as is in our power, on that day in addition to the two modes of determination which we have already spoken of, a third arises, or at least becomes possible, and this mode is the moral mode, properly so called. In fact, not only by the impulse of the passions, as in the primitive state, or by the view of the greatest possible satisfaction of these same passions, as in the egotistical or selfish state, can we be determined to action; but also by the view of order or good in itself, to which our reason has risen, and which has appeared to it as the true law of our conduct. When, then, this motive, acting upon us, decides us to act, a third

form of determination, perfectly distinct from the two others, is produced in us.

The characteristics of this new mode of determination separate it widely from the determination of passion and the egotistical or selfish determination.

Although it has this in common with the egotistical or selfish mode, that it can only take place in a reasonable being (which distinguishes both from the mode of determination of the passions), it is separated from it by circumstances so considerable, that they cannot escape the attention of any one.

As egotism or selfishness and passion can impel us to the same action, so egotism and the moral motive can prescribe to us precisely the same conduct in a multitude of cases; but it is exactly in this coincidence that the differences distinguishing them appear the most conspicuous. The egotistical or selfish motive advises, the moral motive obliges. The former sees only the greatest satisfaction of our nature, and remains personal, even when it counsels us about the good of others; the latter sees only order, and remains impersonal, even when it prescribes to us our own good. We obey ourselves when we obey the former; when we obey the latter, we yield obedience to something which is not ourselves, and which has no other claim in our eyes than that of being good—the characteristic of

a law. There is, then, a devotion of ourselves to something else in the one case, while there can be no such devotion in the other. Now, gentlemen, the devotion of a being to that which is not himself, but to that which appears to him good, is precisely what is called virtue or moral good; from which you see that virtue and moral good can only appear to us in the third state, and are phenomena peculiar to this third form of determination. There is a moral good in us, gentlemen, every time that we obey voluntarily and understandingly the law which is the rule of our conduct; moral evil every time that we disobey this law knowingly and voluntarily. Such is the strict definition of this kind of good and evil, entirely distinct from absolute good and evil, which is order and disorder, and from that part of good and evil which we call the good and evil of man, and which is the accomplishment or non-accomplishment of his end or his order.

The difference between the moral mode of determination and the other two is also found in the phenomena following the determination. Among these phenomena, there is one especially which is characteristic of the moral determination. When we have voluntarily fulfilled the moral law, independently of the special pleasure that our sensibility feels, we judge ourselves worthy of esteem and

recompense; in the opposite case, independently of pain, we judge ourselves worthy of blame and punishment. It is this which is called the satisfaction of having done well and the pain of having done badly, or remorse.

This judgment of merit or demerit takes place necessarily after every action that bears a moral character either good or bad. It does not take place and it cannot take place after the two former modes of determination that I have described. Indeed, when we have acted in opposition to our interest well understood, we can, if we wish, accuse our weakness and our want of skill; in the opposite case we can praise ourselves for our prudence, our wisdom and our skill. But these phenomena are entirely distinct from moral approbation and disapprobation. No one ever experiences remorse for having been wanting to his interest well understood, as such; it is only when this interest has been united to the idea of order, and when our conduct while compromising the one appears to our eyes as having violated the other, that remorse is produced in the train of imprudence; it is the consequence of this last consideration and not of the first. You perceive, gentlemen, that I do not condemn interest well understood; on the contrary, I legalize it as an element of order, and I make a duty of it in many cases. But this is a character that it does not possess by

itself, and which absolute good must communicate to it. Such are the phenomena which in us follow a moral action, good or bad.

The description that I have just given you would be incomplete, gentlemen, if I did not add two observations which comprehend the whole. To what end do our primitive tendencies and the passions derived from them aspire? to the end of our nature —to our true good. To what does our conduct tend when it is directed by interest well understood? to the highest possible realization of the tendencies of our nature—that is, to the fullest possible accomplishment of our end or good. What does the law of order prescribe to us, when it appears in us? the respect and the greatest possible realization of absolute good or order. But our good is an element of good, of absolute order; the law of order, then, makes lawful and prescribes to us imperatively the accomplishment of this good to which our nature impels us and which egotism or selfishness counsels. It is true that it is not in consideration of ourselves, but in consideration of order that it commands us; it is true that it not only prescribes to us our own good, but also the good of others. But besides this, our nature loves order instinctively, inspires to the good of others instinctively; and again, our egotism or selfishness shows us the pleasures of the beautiful and the

pleasures of kindness toward others as two of the great elements of our happiness, and respect for the interests of others, and respect for order in our conduct as one of the best calculations of personal interest. There is, therefore, no contradiction—there is a harmony—between the primitive tendencies of our nature, interest well understood, and the moral law. These three principles do not impel us in opposite directions, but in the same way. The moral motive does not come in to destroy the other two, but to explain and direct them. And, in fact, how could a man conduct himself properly, if he was condemned to constant combats imagined by philosophers—if it was necessary, in the name of the obligatory principle conceived by our reason to sacrifice continually, in order to be virtuous, both the impulses of instinct which drive on our nature, and the counsels of prudence which induce it to pursue its good. No one could be virtuous, if virtue was to be gained on such conditions. Undoubtedly the aim of virtue is different from that of egotism and that of passion; but these aims, far from being contradictory or opposed, are in harmony; and from this it follows that there is not a single virtue but what finds an auxiliary in passion and interest well understood; and from this it also happens that in a multitude of cases, we act through instinct or selfishness, precisely as if we were obey-

ing the moral law. The infant does so, the majority of men do so, and it is by virtue of this harmony that societies exist. For if all the acts which are not done in view of duty, were from this fact alone, contrary to the moral law and hostile to order, not only would societies be unable to exist, but they never would have been formed.

We must, then, give up these false ideas and look at things as they are. This is the way that reason modifies the obedience of man to his passions and to his interest well understood. As the egotistical or selfish reason shows to our nature, beyond the particular ends of the passions, a more general end which embraces them all, which, consequently, ought to be preferred to them, and which, nevertheless, can be brought to light by the blind obedience of the will to the passions; so, beyond our particular good, the moral reason shows to our nature an absolute good, which embraces not only our good but all possible good—which, from this fact alone is to be preferred, and which, however, can be brought to light by the exclusive and narrow search for our own. Thus the character of inferiority with which the impulse of the passions had been stamped by the appearance of interest well understood, the appearance of the moral motive impresses upon interest well understood. But from the fact that the moral motive is a better mo-

tive than egotism, it does not follow that egotism is destroyed in us, any more than it follows that because egotism is a better motive than instinct, instinct is abolished. The seeking after a particular good exists then by the side of the view of absolute good, as the impulse of each passion exists by the side of egotism or selfishness; and in those cases in which selfishness does not see its good in that which is demanded by the respect for absolute good, as in those cases in which the particular passion is prevented from reaching its end by the counsels of selfishness, there is a collision between these motives, and although we continue to see what is best to be done, we are not always sufficiently prudent or sufficiently virtuous to carry it out. This is what the contests of the three motives are reduced to. These contests are generally the effect of the blindness of passion, or a mistake of selfishness; for in reality it is usual for the highest interests of passion to be sacrificed to selfishness, and for the best interests of selfishness to be sacrificed to order.

Hitherto I have spoken of the three moral states which I distinguish in man, as if they belonged to three entirely distinct periods of life; that is, as if one came first, the second afterward, and the third in the end. This is not exactly true, and needs explanation. It must first be understood that when

one of these three forms of determination appears, it does not abolish the one preceding, but is added to it, so that when once produced, they coexist. And now, as to the order in which they appear, it is true that the passionate state precedes the other two in the order of time, and has exclusive sway during infancy, but it would be difficult to affirm a like succession from the egotistical to the moral state.

Although reason appears pretty early in man, no one would dare to maintain that it rises immediately to that high conception of order, which is the moral law; besides, all the world knows that in many men, this high conception of the moral law never takes a definite form. We would have to conclude, then, that there is no morality in man up to a certain age; that there is never any morality in the greater number of men. This cannot be the case, and we must distinguish carefully between a confused and a clear view of the moral law. A confused view of the moral law is contemporaneous with the first appearance of reason in man: it is one of his first conceptions; and with a majority of mankind, this conception remains confused during their whole life, and is never transformed into a clear idea. What is called the moral conscience, gentlemen, is nothing else than this confused idea of order; and from this circumstance, it happens that its results resemble less the results of a concep-

tion of reason, than those of an *instinct* or of a *sense*. Its judgments have not at all the character of being derived from general principles which it applies to particular cases as they are presented; they seem rather to result from a kind of tact, which in each particular case makes the man feel what is good and what is evil. But the obligatory character of good and evil has nothing to do in the phenomena of conscience with the confusion of the perception. Although perceived confusedly, the conscience does not the less present to us this good as something that we ought to do, and this evil as something that we ought to avoid; and when we have obeyed or disobeyed, we feel as vividly approbation and remorse, as if we had obeyed or disobeyed a higher or clearer conception of the moral law. Thus, the conscience, or the confused view of order, is sufficient in conduct to make men virtuous and wicked, criminals and heroes; and yet, gentlemen, he is by far the most culpable, who, conceiving clearly the law and the sacred obligation imposed by it, violates this law, for he violates it with a clearer knowledge. Reasonably, then, does human justice make distinctions between the guilty, and punishes them more or less severely, according as it judges their intelligence more or less developed, and consequently, with a knowledge more or less clear of good and evil.

These details, gentlemen, show you, that as soon as reason is developed in man, it introduces at the same time both the moral and selfish motives, and that thus these two forms of determination, which I have separated in order to describe, are almost contemporaneous. As I have already remarked, they do not destroy the passionate mode which has had exclusive sway in infancy; so that after the age of reason, the life of man is a perpetual alternation between the three moral states, a perpetual going from one to the other, according as passion, selfishness, or the moral law gains the victory over our will, and presides over our determinations. There is no life exempt from these alternations. That which distinguishes men, is the nature of the motive which triumphs the oftenest. Some obey the passions habitually—these are passionate men; others obey interest well understood—these are egotistical or selfish men; others obey the moral motive—these are virtuous men. According as the one or the other of these three modes of determination predominates in the habits of a man, he is clothed with such or such a moral character. There is not a single person that obeys one alone of these three motives exclusively and constantly; no matter how strong may be the habitual predominance of one of them, the other two always preside over some of our determinations. Besides,

in a large number of cases, they concur and act together, in virtue of the harmony which really unites them—and perhaps there are a very few human actions that are derived exclusively from either the one or the other. Thus man is never either entirely virtuous, or entirely selfish, or entirely passionate: with that motive which appears to determine the conduct, is always mingled, more or less, the secret impulse of the other two.

Such is, gentlemen, the description which I wished to present to you of the principal moral facts of human nature.

LECTURE IV.

THE MORAL FACTS OF HUMAN NATURE CONTINUED.

The idea of right and the idea of duty implying the idea of law, and the idea of law implying the idea of obligation, it is evident that the question of the existence of duties and rights is the same thing as the question of the existence in man of an obligatory law, or to shorten the expression, a law, for the word *law* carries with it necessarily the idea of obligation. Before making the inquiry, then, as to what our duties and rights or the rules of our conduct consist in, or what they may be, we must first ask ourselves these two questions: is there a law of obligation for man? and if there is such a law, what is it? We ought still to examine and solve these two questions, even if we had not met with philosophers who have given a negative answer, and who, while seeking to solve the second, were divided upon the nature of this obligatory law, whose existence they recognized. But as certain philosophers have denied the existence of a law of obligation for man, and as, from those who, while

admitting the existence of this law, have attempted to discover it, there have been very many and very different answers, it is manifest that we cannot overlook an examination and a solution of these two questions. For, if the philosophers who say that there is no obligatory law are right, there is no need of our attempting to find out what our duties and rights are; and we could in no manner determine them, if after discovering that such a law exists, we were in doubt as to the nature of this law, and did not choose between the philosophical systems that have reached different results upon the same point.

All the systems that have erred in regard to the principles of natural right or ethics, can be divided into three distinct classes. Among these systems, some maintain that there can be no law of obligation for man; others maintain that in fact there is no such law. These two classes deny the existence of ethics. A third destroys the science of ethics by changing it; it embraces all those, who, while admitting that there is an obligatory law for man, do not recognize the law such as it really exists, and mutilate it in different ways. The result of all these alterations is to destroy it; for there can be but one obligatory law for man, and every system that substitutes another for it, can only lend to this false law the obligation which is only in the human

mind attached to the true law. Thus in different ways, these three classes of systems equally destroy the law of obligation, and in that way all duty and all right, and therefore the whole science of duty and right, and consequently ethics—the whole of morality.

Such are, neither more nor less, the three classes of systems that we have to examine; in examining them, we will be able to solve the two questions: is there an obligatory law for man? and what is this law?

Now, it cannot escape you, that these two questions are questions of fact, and not abstract questions, which can be solved by reasoning. In fact, man is here—he decides, he acts, he is solicited to act by such or such motives. Among these motives, does he meet with one possessing the character of a law, or does he meet with none such? Such is the first question; and if among these motives, there is one which is obligatory, what is this motive, its nature, its character? Such is the second question; and both are questions of fact.

From which you see that to solve these two capital questions, on which depends the whole of ethics, as well as to estimate the worth of the systems that have denied or mutilated ethics, we must observe the moral facts of human nature;

this is the reason that I attempted to give you a description of those facts, if not with all their details, at least with their principal traits. Such was the object of the last lecture. Before proceeding, I must give you a short explanation of the expression—*moral facts*—by which I designated the facts I presented to you; for in such matters, if one does not wish to be mistaken, if one wishes to be understood, he must explain the expressions used by him, and determine perfectly the meaning which he gives them.

There is no morality in human nature, except on the condition that man is free, and subject to a law of obligation. If you suppress either duty, or the possibility of conforming to it, you annihilate all morality; for the conformity of the resolutions of the will to the obligatory law of duty, is precisely that which constitutes morality. Thus, in its proper acceptation, morality signifies the conformity of the human resolutions to the law of duty. When, in any action, this conformity exists, the agent is moral, and the action is moral; when the conformity does not exist, the agent is not moral, and the action is not moral.

This is the precise meaning of the word morality, and from the exact meaning of the word morality, is derived the exact meaning of the epithet moral. It is, then, only by extending the meaning, that I

have been able to call all the facts presented to you *moral*. Here is the analogy which makes this extension legitimate. If there is any morality in human determinations, it can truly be in the phenomena which precede, follow and surround these determinations, that is to say, which concur in producing them. All these facts can, then, by extending the meaning, be called moral facts of human nature, since it is among these facts that are to be met those which especially constitute morality.

And now, gentlemen, since, after what I have said at the beginning, it is absolutely impossible to solve the two questions that I proposed—"is there an obligatory law for man? and what is this law?" since it is equally impossible to value justly any of the systems that have solved the first question negatively, or made a mistake in regard to the second, without referring to the moral facts of human nature, that is, without knowing how the will is really determined in man, you see that it is of the highest importance for your mind to understand clearly all the mechanism of our determinations, and the functions of each of the concurring elements. If your mind does not understand this mechanism, if it does not understand clearly all the springs, it is impossible for a convincing solution of the questions, and a true comprehension of the systems to enter into it. I shall, therefore, once

more, but in a different way, touch upon the principal features of the description that I have already presented to you. In thinking of the effect which must have been produced by this rapid sketch upon those who have not heard all my lectures, it appeared to be my duty, if I wished to be understood, to dwell more fully upon all the features. When we once fully agree upon what really takes place in us in the act of our determinations, you will see that almost all the systems, the classification of which I gave you a short time ago, are explained with perfect clearness. These systems will not be obscure to you; you will see how, in the facts, all have claims; how all alter the facts in such or such a way; how all finally reach erroneous results, in different ways, and through different illusions. If all the principles of human nature which can concur in our moral determinations were developed as soon as we exist, if some of them were not, as it were, postponed, there would be but one single moral state in the human soul. But as, among these elements, there are two that are not developed until a late period of life, it happens that in observing the moral state of man, we do not find it the same at all periods, and therefore we must distinguish the different situations—the different moral states in human nature.

In the preceding lecture, therefore, I described

to you a first moral state, then a second, then a third; in other words, three distinct modes of determination: the primitive mode, the egotistical or selfish mode, and the moral mode, properly so called, in which appears the law of obligation, not to be met with in the other two.

Notwithstanding the diversity of these three states, their elements are not either very numerous or very difficult to seize. Four principles of human nature alone concur to produce them; and provided we separate carefully the function of each of these principles in the three states, we shall have a clear idea of the mechanism of our determinations.

These four principles of human nature are what I have called the instinctive and primitive tendencies of our nature, the faculties with which our nature is provided, the liberty or power we have of employing our faculties, and finally the reason or power of comprehension.

We must now see which of these principles act in each of the states I have described, and what functions they fulfill. On this point I wish to fix your attention again.

Human nature having a peculiar organization which belongs only to it, has, from this very circumstance, as I have already told you, a peculiar end, and one adapted to it.

Now, life commences with the instinctive move-

ment which bears human nature along toward its end. This instinctive movement is not simple, it is complex; in other words, it is decomposed into a certain number of instinctive movements, each one of which has its particular object, and the whole of these particular objects compose the end of man, or his good. These instinctive movements are developed in us as soon as we exist; for, if a movement should elapse between the beginning of our existence and the development of these movements, there would be a moment in which we would exist but would not live. Such is not the case and cannot be: man lives inevitably as soon as he exists, and to live is the same thing for man as to aspire to his end. From the very moment, then, that man exists, he feels awakening in him all the instincts placed in him—that is, all the desires resulting from his organization—and these desires, these instincts aspire blindly each to its own particular object. These are the primitive tendencies of our nature; there is not a single moment in man's existence in which this development, commencing with life and constituting it, is suspended; it exists even in sleep; for the motives of human activity in sleep are the same as in waking; their action is permanent.

As I have already said, these primitive tendencies are the motives of our activity; they consti-

tute the motive power in us. In fact, it is through them that our nature is excited to act, and our faculties put in motion; for the final aim of the activity of our faculties is the satisfaction of those primitive and permanent wants, instinctive and blind, which show through the passions what our nature is and what it wishes; why it was made and what its end is.

It is therefore impossible, in any of the three states described by me, not to meet the element of the primitive and instinctive tendencies. We meet it in all the states; its sway, however, is in the first.

Such, gentlemen, is the first of the four principles that concur in our determinations: I call it the *moving force* or *impulse.*

The second element or the second principle of our nature which concurs in our denominations, is what I have called by the name of faculties. If the Creator had given to man an end and an imperative desire to attain it, and had not endowed human nature with the instruments or faculties necessary to satisfy this desire—to realize this end—there would have been a contradiction in his works; there is, therefore, the strongest necessity that, in addition to the primitive tendencies of our nature impelling us toward our end, our nature should possess a certain number of faculties or instru-

ments making it capable of attaining this end. These faculties, gentlemen, constitute the second of the four elements with which we are at present occupied.

We must not confound the faculties which are the executive power in us, with the liberty which governs this power and has the direction of it. There is a period in the life of man, and perhaps this period lasts a considerable time when there is no governmental power in us, if I can call it such—that is, when the fact of the direction of our faculties by ourselves, which is liberty does not as yet exist. During the first years of infancy, we do not govern our faculties, and these years are succeeded by others, during which we govern them with difficulty. The instruments that we call such exist and act in us at that very time; but they act without our interference, or what comes to the same thing, without our will impressing a direction upon them, and under the sole impulse of our tendencies. The executive force, or the faculties, is, therefore, a different thing from the principle of human nature which I call the *will*, and whose function it is to direct them. The first of these principles exists without the second in the beginning of life, and that independence continues to be revealed in every period of man's existence.

The faculties of human nature never sleep, they

never cease to act. As the primitive tendencies of human nature continually impel human nature to act, the faculties of human nature are always in a certain movement and in a certain action. But it is not the same with the will; not only do we not govern our faculties in the early years of our life, but we often cease to govern them at every period: it can happen and often does happen, in the developed man, that there is no intermediary between the passionate or the impulsive part of our nature, and the executive part or the faculties, and that the former acts immediately and without intervention upon the latter. This phenomenon is produced in those numerous cases in which strong passions drag along hastily the action of the faculties, and in those in which our will, tired of governing, reposes, and suspends for a moment the guardianship which it exercises over them. The will is then an intermitting power, while the faculties act incessantly at different degrees of energy or weakness.

We see that it is the same with our faculties, or our executive power, as with the primitive tendencies of our nature; that this power is, like them, in constant movement; but that this power can be placed under two directions, sometimes under the direction of the tendencies acting immediately upon it and urging it to action—this is the primitive state, sometimes under the direction of liberty or

the governmental faculty which appears later, and the action of which, even after its appearance, is not unceasing. Liberty presupposes reason, and comes only with it; when these two principles are introduced as intermediaries between the instinctive movements of our nature and our faculties, then our situation changes completely.

It remains for us to see now what part these last two principles play in the mechanism of our determinations; for, by adding these two principles to the primitive tendencies and to the faculties, we have all the elements concurring in our determinations.

We do not know *a priori* that it is given us to control our faculties and direct them; on the contrary, we are entirely ignorant of it; and we would never learn it, if experience did not teach us. Therefore, in the early years of our life, there is as yet no sign of the government of our faculties by ourselves. Our faculties, as I have already said, are entirely under the impulse of the tendencies of our nature, which, desiring certain objects, aspiring to certain ends, drive our faculties in the direction they wish, without our intervening to impede this direction or to rectify it.

Hence, it happens that as long as there is among our primitive tendencies one which is dominant, all the faculties enter into the direction willed by this

dominant passion; but as soon as another and stronger passion arises, our faculties quit the direction they had, to take that which this new passion impresses on them.

Hence the constant change we remark in the determinations and conduct of infants. Nothing being so variable as the relative strength of our different passions, and the faculties falling necessarily under the impulse of the strongest, there must result a constant and infinite change in the determinations of infants; this change is pictured in their features, their movements and their ideas, and creates at once both their grace and character. And yet it is in this very early period of life that is revealed to man the power he has over his faculties. This is the way it happens.

No matter what may be the object, toward which our primitive tendencies impel us, and which our faculties put in motion by these tendencies endeavor to gain, we never do gain it without difficulty; something always opposes the prompt satisfaction of the instinct.

What happens then? Our faculties, finding themselves powerless on account of the obstacles they meet with, concentrate themselves spontaneously, in order to overcome them—that is, unite all their forces, and apply them to the one resisting point.

Here is our revelation of the power we possess over our faculties. When we feel, in the depths of our nature, that our dispersed forces are united and concentrated upon one point, we feel that we can reproduce and repeat this concentration at will, whenever we please. Feeling that we can do so, we make use of this power. Then the governing force, or liberty, appears in us; it is thus revealed to us by experience; otherwise we would always have been ignorant of it.

In the primitive state that I have described to you, commences, then, to appear the power of human liberty. This power, however, not being as yet directed by the reason, which is not yet awakened, produces only temporary and variable effects. When passion urgently demands its satisfaction, and when the force which is in us finds some difficulty in gaining this satisfaction, it then concentrates itself. But when a still stronger passion comes to call the action of our faculties into another direction, or when an obstacle, while resisting, renders the contest fatiguing, the bent spring immediately unbends, and the concentration ceases. In other words, the liberty, being, so to speak, only instinctive, and not yet having a rational motive upon which it can rest, is uncertain and vacillating; it lasts a short time; its results are almost nothing; it scarcely does more than show itself; reason must

ntervene, in order that it may be developed and produce great results.

So far we have three of the principles which concur in the phenomena of our determinations: they are the motive power or primitive tendencies of our nature; the executive power or the faculties; lastly, the governing power or liberty, that is, the power possessed by us of controlling our faculties.

The fourth principle is what I call the reason or faculty of comprehension.

I have already told you, gentlemen, that when the reason appears, it finds in us the three other principles already in action. From the very moment of man's existence, he feels certain desires, instincts, passions developing in him; from the moment of his existence, his faculties are put in motion, and act under the impulse of these wants: from the moment of his existence, they concentrate spontaneously every time they experience any resistance, and in this voluntary movement, it appears that they can be governed. Up to the present time, however, the faculties have only been governed by the tendencies; they have yielded always like slaves to the strongest impulse: nothing has modified, nothing has limited the empire of the passions over them. The day in which reason appears, this slavery ceases; for with the impulse of the passions, is mingled something

which is not an impulse, but—notice the word, it exists in all languages—a *motive*. Up to that time we were determined to action by an impulse entirely blind; the day on which reason appears, whether it advises us or imposes laws, man has a motive for acting. A new principle which comes to take part in our determinations, and modifies them considerably—a new principle, the influence of which, in the whole mechanism, we must show you.

The reason does two things: in the first place, observing what takes place in us, it comprehends that all these tendencies which are being developed, require to be satisfied, and generalizing the idea of satisfaction, it comprehends that this is our good; again, it remarks that when abandoned to itself, our nature goes to work badly to gain the greatest possible satisfaction of these tendencies; it is unsuccessful in the pursuit, because it obeys all the changes of the tendencies, and because it does not persevere sufficiently in the effort made by it to satisfy them. It is therefore necessary that reason should introduce a rule into the conduct of our faculties, by ascertaining the high end which they ought to attain, and the road which they ought to follow to reach it. This is what reason does; on the one hand it rises to the idea of our interest well understood; on the other hand, it calculates the best conduct to be observed, in order to realize this

interest. In view of this end which is placed before it, and this plan traced out for its attainment, liberty, or the power we have over our faculties, gains the control over them, withdraws them from the mechanical impulse of the tendencies, and governs them. A motive, a rule, takes the place of the impulse, and our conduct becomes rational instead of passionate, blind and instinctive.

Such is the first result of the appearance of reason in the phenomena of our determinations.

It is evident that if the reason had no other duty to perform in our determinations than to comprehend the end of our passions, and to calculate the best means of accomplishing it, there would be no law of obligation for us. And, in fact, we do not feel at all obliged to satisfy the tendencies of our nature; when our reason proposes to us their greatest satisfaction as an end, it counsels us in the interest of the satisfaction of our nature; but this advice has no obligatory character for us; in other words, interest well understood, calculated by reason, is nothing else than the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature, and this interest well understood will never be clothed with the character of obligation for any understanding. Interest well understood, is a different thing from the mechanical impulse of the passions; it is a motive, but not a law.

But reason does not stop at interest well understood; it goes further, and introduces a second rational element, a second motive into our determinations; this second motive is the idea of good. Interest well understood, is the conception of the good of the individual, it is not the conception of good in itself. The day on which reason perceives that in the same way that there is a good for us, so there is a good for all creatures; that thus the particular good of each creature is nothing else than an element of absolute good, or universal order; on that day, the idea of good thus deduced, elevated to the absolute, appears to our reason as obligatory. From that moment a new motive of acting, a new principle of conduct is revealed to us, and introduced into the mechanism of our determinations. This principle is a principle of obligation, is a law. If this principle did not appear, if this idea was not inferred in our mind by an effort of reason, the word morality would have no meaning; there would be neither rights nor duties; it would be useless to seek for a science of natural right and ethics; the only thing we should have to seek for, would be the best manner of conducting ourselves, in order to realize interest well understood. When I examine the opinion which claims that all rests upon this, you will see that it is impossible to deduce any duty toward others from interest well

understood; we cannot, indeed, attribute to the idea of personal good what it does not contain—the idea of the good of others—and extend to one the motive that impels us to the other.

You see, then, that four principles of our nature compose the whole machinery of our moral determinations. You perceive that because two of these principles, liberty and reason, are developed late, and that the development of reason itself has two movements, man's life has different distinct moral situations.

The first of these situations contains only two elements: the tendencies of our nature, or impulse, and the faculties of our nature, or the executive power. In this situation, impulse acts immediately upon our faculties, and they cannot avoid the impulse.

Later is developed a beginning of self-control, and later still this control over ourselves becomes as strong as we wish it; and then, between the impulse of our passions and the faculties, comes a power which controls the latter, and which does not permit them to yield to the impulse of passion, without consent. But in order that this power, which is liberty, may be able not to consent always to yield to the impulse of passion, it must have a support. A fourth element must therefore enter, that is, a motive or a reason for acting, which is not an impulse.

It is the reason that adds this new element, that introduces it into the phenomena of our determinations. But there are two motives successively introduced by the reason. The first is only the general idea, the sum of what the tendencies of our nature require; it has no authority but their authority, and controls our tendencies only because it comprehends what they wish, and shows us the best means of satisfying them. *Interest well understood*, is the first motive which gives to liberty, or self-control, a support against the purely mechanical impulses.

The second motive introduced by reason, or the second support given by reason to liberty, is still more powerful; it is the idea of good in itself; which idea of good no longer sums up the end of the impulses—their interest well understood—but an end, an interest entirely impersonal, the universal end of the creation, which is absolute good, which is order. Now there is but one such idea, one such end, one such good, that can have the character of obligation; for whatever is personal, not being superior to the person, cannot in any manner oblige him. The idea of law implies something external and superior to the person, something universal that comprehends, and is superior to the particular. Such is the idea of absolute good or universal order to which reason rises, and

which appears to it immediately as a legislative and obligatory motive. From this time, liberty, resting on this idea, has no longer only the motive of interest well understood, of the passions to resist their mechanical impulse; it has another, more comprehensive and more powerful—the motive of the realization of good in ourselves and out of ourselves—the motive of the accomplishment, and the respect of order in the development of our nature and in that of others. In this idea of good is comprised the idea of our own good as well as that of others; and the realization of these two goods becomes obligatory, for the common reason that they are elements of order or absolute good, which is obligatory. Thus the good of others becomes an element in our determinations, and our good becomes clothed with the character of impersonality, which it had not before. When liberty has found this new support, not only does it become stronger against the mechanical impulses, but it escapes, if it wishes, from every personal motive. Then is morality possible for man; the condition of all morality, which is to act in the name of a motive or of an impersonal idea, in the name of a law, is given; it did not exist before.

And now, gentlemen, if I have not been very unsuccessful in analyzing the complex phenomenon of our determinations, you must understand both

the elements and the mechanism. Such is the phenomenon in its three forms. I think that I have drawn the whole description from the reality of the human consciousness; and if it is not yet complete in details, I think that it is truthful in its principal features and in the outline.

But, gentlemen, whether we yield to the impulsive instincts of our nature, or act in virtue of the motive that I call interest well understood, or lastly, obey a law of duty—the idea of good—we always meet obstacles between our end and ourselves, which it is not given to us to surmount completely in this life. Hence, in all the cases possible, there is a perpetual and fundamental conflict between our nature and the situation in which we are placed, that is, the very foundation of human condition in this world.

But independently of this fundamental conflict, which is reproduced in all the moral situations possible, each moral situation contains in its bosom a different internal contest, and one peculiar to itself. In the primitive state, in which there are but two principles in play—the tendencies of our nature and our faculties—there is a contest between the different tendencies of our nature; for when one is dominant, it oppresses the others, which, in their turn, gain the upper hand, and suppress the first. A stormy and perpetual contradiction exists neces-

sarily between these different tendencies, all exclusive, and of which often one can only be satisfied at the expense of the others.

In the egotistical or selfish state there is not only this contest between our different passions, but there is also another between our different passions and the motive of interest well understood. For, as we conduct ourselves according to the rules of interest well understood, only on this condition, that we contain and repress the natural action of our different passions, we often sacrifice the strongest to the weakest passion, the present to the future, and this in virtue of our greatest interest, or an idea of our reason. There is, then, a contest, in the selfish or egotistical state, between the motive and the impulse, and we cannot sacrifice the one to the other without regret if we sacrifice the motive, without pain if we sacrifice the passion.

In the third state, or in the moral state properly so called, these two contests still exist; but they are interwoven with a third, which arises between interest well understood, the expression of our personal good, and duty, the expression of good in itself. In many cases we are obliged to sacrifice interest well understood to good in itself, and whatever side we choose, we cannot escape remorse if personal good gains the day, or regret if duty triumphs. At the bottom of all these triumphs there

is a fundamental one, that of man against nature; without the latter the others would not exist: it exists, however, by the very nature of things, and out of its fruitful bosom spring all the others.

Thus, the land, if I may so call it, of the moral determinations is a field of battle in which eternal combats take place. These combats are life itself with its various trials and its great fundamental pain, the struggle of man against what is not himself. And yet, gentlemen, at the bottom of all these contradictions there is a profound concord; as I have already shown you the contest and the struggle, I must also show you the accord and harmony.

Is it not true that if we had the strength to act continually according to the law of our interest well understood, and this interest had been perfectly calculated by our reason, the satisfaction of our interest well understood would comprehend, would envelop, if I can say so, the greatest possible satisfaction of all our tendencies—that is, of all our passions? Such is the case, without doubt: for if we prefer the rule of interest well understood to the mechanical impulse of passion, it is in the interest of passion itself—that is, in the interest of our greatest good. Thus, in yielding to the egotistical or selfish motive, far from sacrificing the passions, we think that we are serving them; in obey-

ing it, we obey our passions—that is, the tendencies of our nature; the satisfaction of the one implies the satisfaction of the others. There is therefore a harmony between our tendencies and the calculation of our greatest interest.

There is also a profound sympathy, a sympathy demonstrated by experience, between obedience to the law of duty and our interest well understood.

The philosophers, who have recognized and established the principle of the law of duty, in order to conciliate men and draw to this law those over whom interest well understood has great influence, have demonstrated by experience and by reasoning, that the best way of being happy is to remain, in all cases that can arise, faithful to the law of duty. Again, those who have not recognized the law of duty (those who deny it) have attempted to account for it by showing that it would be sufficient for men of elevated reason and great experience to calculate what would be the greatest interest of man, in order to prescribe to him precisely all that is contained in the moral law. Thus, both the partisans of interest well understood and the partisans of the law of duty agree in recognizing the profound and definite harmony existing between the commands of the one and the rules of the other. And, indeed, it is impossible that it should be otherwise: for what does the law of duty counsel us?

It wishes us to fulfill our destiny; but it wishes us also not to prevent others from fulfilling theirs, and even to aid them. But there are also passions in us which demand the same thing. In fact, our passions are not all personal; they have not all for their object our particular good; we carry about us also passions that are sympathetic, benevolent, which have for their aim the good of others. When, therefore, the good of others is not produced, when others suffer, we suffer also through these passions. Thus when the feeling of pity arises in me, if the individual exciting this pity is not comforted, I suffer, I am unhappy. When I experience a feeling of sympathy for a person—a lively sympathy—if this person is not happy I suffer, as if I was suffering from my own misfortune.

There is therefore a large portion of the primitive tendencies of our nature that aspire to the good—that is, to the accomplishment of the destiny of others, as to their end. Our interest well understood embraces, then, also, as a condition, the good of others. From which you see that there is a profound harmony between the conduct prescribed by the law of duty, or by the idea of good in itself, and the conduct counselled by interest well understood, or the idea of our good. And as interest well understood coincides with the satisfaction of the instinctive tendencies of our nature, it

follows that these three motives imply each other mutually, and that actually, notwithstanding the struggles produced on the surface, actually, I repeat, there is a profound harmony between them. But these three motives are not the less perfectly distinct because they harmonize, and to obey one is not the same thing as to obey another. If you yield to passion, you lower yourself to the rank of brutes, for this is precisely their mode of determinations. The nature of animals, like our own nature, impels them to their end; like us, they possess faculties to reach this end. But no motive is ever interposed between the mechanical impulse of their wants and the faculties with which they are furnished to satisfy them. When, therefore, man yields to passion, his determination is purely animal; as long as he acts only in this way, his life is the life of the animal. The day on which man rises to interest well understood, he becomes a reasonable being; he calculates his conduct, he is master of his faculties, he subjects them to the plan he has formed; he is a man, but not yet a moral man; and he only becomes a moral man on that day on which he forsakes the idea of his own peculiar good, to obey only the idea of good in itself; on that day he becomes moral, for he obeys a law; on that day he rises as much above the selfish or egotistical being as the egotistical being is

elevated above the animal: in a word, the phenomena of moral good and moral evil are produced, and with them all that makes the grandeur and the glory of our nature.

This leads us to take a rapid review of the different kinds of good, and to establish the notions of them precisely; for a settled and precise meaning of these notions is indispensable to the comprehension of the succeeding lectures.

I have already told you, gentlemen, the good for man, as for every possible being, is the accomplishment of his end; it is this to which his nature condemns him to aspire and approach incessantly; it is this which satisfies the tendencies of his nature. Thus, my nature is intelligent; to know is therefore a good for me. My nature is sympathetic, the happiness of others is therefore a good for me. Let us suppose a being neither intelligent nor sympathetic; knowledge and the happiness of others are neither of them good for such a being; its nature does not aspire to them; these two things do not make part of its end, because they are not demanded by its organization. We can only define *real good* for any being when we understand all that its nature requires—that is, when we know its nature.

Whenever my *real good* is produced in me in one way or another, there results a *sensible good*, that

is, a pleasure. It is a second kind of good perfectly distinct from the first, and which is produced in a being on two conditions: first, on the condition that it is sensitive; secondly on the condition that some part of the real good of this being has been produced. For the agreeable sensation, the pleasure, the sensible good is only a consequence, an effect, a sign of the real good. Such is the *sensible good*, which is generally called *happiness*.

Lastly, there is a third kind of good, which is only produced in moral beings, as the former is only produced in sensitive beings; it is moral good. When my reason has discovered an obligatory motive—that is, a law—and when my will acts in conformity to this law, there is moral good; when, on the contrary, it violates this law, there is moral evil. So that moral good is nothing else than the conformity of the resolutions of a reasonable being to the law of obligation placed before him by reason. When I act in the name of my interest well understood, there is neither moral good nor moral evil, unless I violate knowingly some of the commands of the moral law.

Such are the three kinds of good and evil. You perceive now the marked differences separating the real good and evil, the sensible good and evil, the moral good and evil, and the peculiar characters of each. Human nature remains an impenetrable

enigma to him who has not analyzed these three things that are so different, and you see all the false systems and errors produced by their confusion.

In the three states that I have described there is real good and evil, and consequently sensible good and evil; in the third only can there be moral good and evil. I will recall to your mind, in passing, that moral good and evil have a sensible effect like real good and evil; that is, we cannot obey the moral law without this obedience producing a pleasure, and we cannot disobey the moral law without this disobedience producing a pain in us; I add that, this pleasure and this pain being accompanied by a judgment of the reason, which not only says to the agent, "you have done well or badly," but "you are worthy of praise or blame;" this pleasure and pain, from this circumstance, are the profoundest that it is given to human sensibility to experience.

It follows from this analysis that sensible good and evil could not exist without the other two, and it also follows that moral good and evil could not exist without the real good and evil; for if we had no end, we could have no law. Real good is then the condition of all good in us; real evil is the condition of all evil. They draw after them the sensible good and evil, if the agent is sensitive, and the moral good and evil if he is reasonable.

LECTURE V.

THEORETICAL VIEWS.

GENTLEMEN: I have come, finally, to the most difficult part of this course of lectures. Up to the present time I have made known to you the ideas of philosophers upon the problem of morality, and I have subjected these ideas to the criticism of facts. This double task required only patience and ordinary penetration. By an attentive study it is always possible to understand philosophical systems; with intelligence and a truth-loving spirit we can always show in what way these systems contradict the facts of human nature and the history of society. What I have done so far presented no great difficulties. The task I have now to fulfill is much less easy; I am going to submit to you nothing less than a system on the fundamental principle of morality, such a system as will stand the tests before which we saw the systems of philosophers fail. This system must fulfill two conditions: first, it must be founded clearly on the moral facts which which I have already made

known to you; secondly, it must furnish a principle so true, and a method so available, that in applying them to all the situations possible in which man can be placed, our duties and rights in each of these situations will flow from them manifestly and naturally. If I am deceived in the solution which I shall give you, it will appear when I am obliged to draw strictly from this solution the duties of man toward himself, toward his fellow beings, toward God and things; but long before we subject it to this proof, its falsity, if it is not correct, will be revealed to you, prepared as you are by the knowledge which I have given you of the moral facts of our nature and by the criticism we have made of the systems of former philosophers measured by these facts. None of those systems satisfied you completely, and it now becomes my duty to present you with one which will do so. Not to be alarmed at such an undertaking would be more than temerity, if the studies which made us comprehend the difficulties did not at the same time prepare us to surmount them. In fact, thanks to those studies, the question is perfectly simple; the facts which must solve it have been analyzed; the shoals where philosophers have been wrecked are marked; a multitude of mistakes into which they have fallen, for want of making certain distinctions, are hereafter impossible for us. Let us enter, then,

courageously into the subject, gentlemen; only let us not forget that the question is very complex and that I shall be obliged to separate the elements one after the other; do not judge me hastily: wait until my thought is complete before pronouncing; this is the only kind of indulgence which I have a right to claim, and this I ask.

I have already told you, gentlemen, that the problem, the solution of which we are trying to discover, presents itself always, when in any particular case we have to make a moral judgment. Every moral judgment made implies its solution. In fact, you do not make a moral decision in a particular case except on condition of judging in that particular case what is good and what is evil; but you cannot separate the good from the evil in this particular case except on condition of knowing what good is and what evil is, and you cannot know what good is or what evil is, without having annexed an idea to the word good. Now, this idea is precisely what all systems of morality seek and what we ourselves are seeking; this idea is precisely the solution of the moral problem. Each moral concept, to make use of Kant's language, each judgment, each particular moral determination, to make use of a more ordinary language, contains, then, the whole moral problem, and implies its solution. Whoever could tell for what

reason, in any particular case, he decides that such conduct is good and such bad, could, at the same time, tell what good and evil are, that is, he would have an opinion, a system upon the problem now occupying us. Whence it follows that we can consider each moral judgment as containing all the elements of morality; this is what I shall endeavor to show you, by analyzing one of these judgments.

My object in this analysis is to cause you to distinguish two distinct elements in these judgments—one common to all moral judgments—the other peculiar to each moral judgment—one which is the form, if you permit me to use the expression of Kant, of every moral judgment; the other the matter. Take an occasion in which you feel that the resolution you are about to take will render you praiseworthy or blameworthy, in which, in other words, you feel that morality is concerned. Perhaps, in reality, there is no resolution in which morality is not interested, but there are some undoubtedly in which it appears to be more so than in others. Let us select, then, one of these occasions when the conscience presents the problem clearly, and let us discover what passes in our minds when we busy ourselves voluntarily or involuntarily in its solution.

It is evident that if we knew that which is good and that which is evil in this particular case, by

doing what is good we would be praiseworthy: in doing what is evil we would be deserving of blame. Our intellect distinguishes, then, very plainly that which I have called moral good and moral evil, or the conformity and nonconformity of the act to the moral rule. It is clear to our intellect, however little it may reflect upon it, that moral good presupposes the idea of what is good in itself, and that one of these goods is not the other. It is also clear that the first depends upon the will, while the second does not; and that what is good in itself is anterior to the act, and, consequently, prior to the production of moral good and evil. It survives the act, that is, the existence of moral good and evil. If there was no act at all, that which is good in itself would exist none the less. Every intellect finds, then, in every particular moral deliberation, the clear or confused distinction of two kinds of good: first, the *moral good*, which consists in the conformity of the act to what is good, which could not exist if there was no act and which would not be possible if there was no intelligent and free being; secondly, *good in itself*, which exists before the other, which would exist if there was neither act to realize it nor intelligent and free spirit to comprehend it, but without the conception, and consequently without the existence of which the moral good would be impossible. From this dis-

tinction results for every intelligence, in every moral judgment, the necessity of determining, before everything else, what is good and what is evil in itself in any particular case; which cannot be done unless we know first in what good consists: for we cannot clearly determine what good and evil are in any particular case except on the condition of knowing what the idea of good contains. Every moral determination presupposes, then, two things; first, the idea of good; second, the inquiry, by means of this idea, of what good is in the case about which we are deliberating. Thus, supposing that you are deliberating over the question of what you ought to do when something has been deposited with you in trust; whether you ought to restore it, or whether you can keep it. It is clear that if you did not know in what good consists, it would be impossible for you to know which of the two acts conforms to good—whether the restoring of the deposit or the keeping it—and that thus you could make no decision. For this to be possible, you must have the idea of good, and in applying this idea, you must find out that which is conformable to it, either the restoring or the not restoring of the deposit.

There is, then, a dialectic and casuistic inquiry in every moral deliberation, and this inquiry has two objects: first, to discover if the idea of good applies to the particular case; secondly, supposing that it

does apply, how does the idea judge it. There is, besides, in every moral deliberation, a datum prior to this deliberation, and without which it would be impossible, namely: the idea itself of good. It is in this indispensable datum that the solution of the problem is necessarily implied in every particular moral judgment.

Now, gentlemen, what is necessary in order that the idea of good, from which you proceed to determine what is good and what is evil in each particular case, should satisfy you? I have already told you, and I repeat it: there must be an absolute equation between the confused idea that the word good excites in your mind and the clear idea by which you will explain it; there must, in translating the word good by this clear idea, result a proposition so evident, that it shall leave no doubt in your mind; in other words, this clear idea must appear to you like that already existing in you in a confused state and like that which you wish to express in pronouncing the word good. On these conditions you can accept a definition of good as solving the moral problem. By these signs you will recognize in your definition the true solution of this problem.

Whatever your determination may be, gentlemen, there is one thing you already know: it is that the idea which the determination will give you of

good will be at the same time the idea of what you are held and obliged to do morally. There is for you, previously to every definition of good, an absolute equation, clear or confused, between good and what we ought to do. In other words, the idea of good draws with it the idea of obligation. We may not know in what good consists, we may define it inexactly or falsely, but what is far from doubtful is that to the true idea of good is imperatively attached the obligation of accomplishing it.

Thus, gentlemen, all is clear in the moral concept except one thing—the idea itself of good; the analysis of every particular moral judgment shows you this plainly. You know clearly that you are obliged to conform your conduct to the idea of good, that you will be virtuous and deserving of praise if you do it, culpable and meriting blame if you do not do it. You see only confusedly in what consists the good you are bound to do, and the realization of which in your conduct will render you praiseworthy; and notwithstanding, however confused and erroneous this view may be, it is manifest that you have that without which you could not judge in the particular case.

The only thing requisite, then, in the moral inquiry, is to make clear this confused view, to rectify this apperception which may be inaccurate; here is the whole moral problem, and it will be

solved when we have found an idea which forms with the idea of good, such as exists vaguely in us, a clear equation for our minds. Before we ourselves commence to search for this idea, let us recall once more the ideas which the different systems we have examined have proposed.

The instinctive system defines good to be, that which our nature desires at the present moment. To solve the problem, this system says to man placed in any situation: see if your nature desires it; if your nature does desire it, if any of your instincts drive you to it, do it, for it is your good. I ask if there is, for any human understanding, an equation between the idea of good and the impulse of my nature. Can you say: That, toward which my nature impels me, is good; that, which my nature desires in each particular case, is good? No, there is no proof in that equation; because the instinctive system is false.

What does the selfish system say? The selfish system says: what our nature desires in each particular case is not our good, for if we yield to all our desires in each particular case, we will make ourself very miserable, and this is not what our nature desires. What it desires, is the greatest possible satisfaction of all its desires, and not the successive satisfaction of its desires. The selfish system says, then: do not yield to impulse, but

find out what your nature desires in the whole, and do this in each particular case.

You perceive that there is no other difference between the instinctive and selfish systems than that between instinct and calculation. The equation by which the selfish system solves the moral problem is the same as that by which the instinctive system solves it; the selfish system supposes the equation of good and of what our nature desires as a whole. Now, there is not more proof in the one of these equations than the other, precisely because they are the same. The selfish system does not, therefore, solve the problem.

How do the systems which I compared to the Scotch school—that is, the first class of rational systems, how do they solve the problem? As follows: These systems maintain that, in each particular case, we perceive in the act to be done a certain quality which is moral goodness, or the contrary quality which is moral badness; that in the first case, we have to do the act; in the second case, we have to shun it; but that this quality represented by the word good is so simple, so indecomposable, so primitive, that it is impossible to translate the idea by one more simple. So that to the question which every man proposes to himself about what he ought to do in each particular case, these systems answer: good—that is, they do not agree in making clear

the idea of good, and they even maintain that it cannot be made clear.

It follows that when we make a determination in a given case, we cannot justify it; we can say nothing in order to justify it. In fact, the only reasons we can give for having acted in a certain way in a particular case, is to show, first, what good is; secondly, how there is good in that particular case. Now the Scotch school, and all the systems which belong to that school, maintain that the idea of good is a simple idea, indecomposable; to those who ask you to justify the determination you have taken, the only answer is: I have taken it because it seemed to me good. But is it not evident that when we have acted in a certain way, we have a thousand means of justifying the resolution that we have taken, and is it not also true that we deliberate sometimes in order to know where the good is, and where the evil is? How could we deliberate if the good was so visible a quality? This system cannot be supported, although nothing can be said against the equation which it proposes: good is good.

How does Kant solve the question?

He does not solve it directly. Kant has established and taught the signs by means of which you can recognize the existence of good in each particular case. See if what you wish to do appears to

you obligatory, not only for you but for all the intelligent beings possible. Assuredly, gentlemen, this is a good way, but it is blind and does not solve the question. It is not thus we should conduct ourselves in case we were deciding what we ought and what we ought not to do. It is evident that if things happened as Kant affirms, when we would justify a certain determination which we had taken, it would not be sufficient to say: I have taken it because I believed myself obliged to take it, because I felt that it was my duty. As there is an equation between good and what ought to be done, to translate the idea of good by the idea of what ought to be done, is to translate the idea of good by the idea of good; this is to elucidate nothing; it is to leave the intellect in the obscurity in which it was, and from which it is the object of a moral system to rescue it. So that the means indicated by Kant, good as a casuistic and practical means, does not solve the problem.

How do the other systems which agree in explaining the idea of good solve the problem? Some solve it by the idea of truth, others by the idea of order, others by the idea of what is conformable to our nature, etc. None of these solutions seemed to us either entirely true or entirely false—that is, although none seemed to want proof, still none seemed to us to have attained that degree of

clearness which the conscience demands. In other words, there is an appeal of the conscience against all these systems. You must remember, however, that I did not examine these systems in detail. What they possess of truth and falsity will become apparent to you when I shall have given you my solution which I regard as true. Such are briefly the results obtained by the examination of the different systems. You see that a man placed in a moral situation—that is, obliged to determine in a particular case what he ought to do—that is, to determine what is good and what evil in the particular case, consequently obliged to have the idea of good clearly or confusedly—finds nothing in these different solutions which answers to what each of us feels that he places under the idea of good, to what each of us feels is concealed under that idea.

Now, gentlemen, before telling you, or rather before telling you again, what is the idea hidden under the word good, and forms with it an absolute equation, permit me to separate for you in every moral judgment two distinct elements, which I shall call the form and matter of judgment. I fear less to make use of these expressions since I have made you understand their meaning, while explaining Kant's doctrin

Each particular case in which we can be called

upon to separate the good from the evil, and consequently what we ought to do from what we ought to shun, carries with it also particular circumstances; without which there would be no diversity in the moral situation in which we seek for what we ought to do. It is, therefore, very clear that the different cases into which we carry the moral judgment, furnish for this judgment elements which are not the same, and which vary from one case to another. Thus in the case of a deposit which has been confided to me, what is peculiar about it is the fact of my receiving a deposit, and all the different circumstances which can surround it and give it a peculiar aspect. When I deliberate about this case, I do not deliberate whether or not I ought to assist an unfortunate person, nor upon any other cases which the moral deliberations can present. Now that which varies thus from one case to another is peculiar to each, and this is what I call the matter of the judgment. But independently of this fluctuating and peculiar element, every moral judgment contains another common to all, and which does not vary from one to the other: this element, which I call the *form* of the judgment, is the *a priori* element—that which is not furnished by experience but given by reason; in a word the idea of good. There are then in every moral judgment two data—first, the idea of

good or the form—secondly, the particular case to be estimated, or the matter. The moral judgment results from the bringing together of these two elements. The empirical element or the matter being given, the rational element or the form applies itself to it, and determines in the particular case that which is good and that which is evil. Then the judgment being given, I do or do not conform to it, which renders me praiseworthy or blameworthy, which produces the moral good or moral evil entirely distinct from the good in itself which I first perceived and determined. You see, moreover, that the *a priori* element or the form of good is invariable, the same for all cases, and that the empirical element or the matter of good varies in different cases. Well, gentlemen, one case alone is sufficient for our reason to conceive the form of good—that is, what the idea of good represents in itself. But it is a long and tedious inquiry to determine, in all the situations in which man can be placed, in what good consists. I make this broad distinction, because it explains the fact which caused the majority of the moral systems to fail; because all men have the idea of good, and feel obliged to conform their conduct to it, and because they differ still infinitely in the judgments they pass upon what is good; because it is this which makes the most savage nations think as we do, that

there is a good and evil, and that they have rights and duties, and because upon the question of learning in what consist this good, this evil, these duties and rights in particular cases, they are still deceived and commit mistakes which a less imperfect state of civilization escapes, and which a more advanced state of civilization amends almost completely.

Not only does the distinction between the form and the matter of good explain the fact of the progressive improvements of morality at the same time that it explains its immutability, and its diversity at the same time as its universality; but it also explains another important fact, which is reproduced continually, the difference existing between the morality of the agent and the rectitude of the act.

In fact, gentlemen, to what is moral obligation attached? To the idea itself of good. From the moment that I have the idea of good, I feel that I am constrained to do it; but in particular cases I may be deceived, and take for good what is evil; it can happen, then, and does often happen, that I think I feel myself obliged to do an act bad in itself: if I act in this case my intention is good, and my action is not. The innocence of the agent is separated, then, from the rectitude of the action; my intention has been good and I am acquitted; but the action remains none the less bad. Whence

comes this apparent contradiction? Solely from the fact that it is one thing to conceive the idea of good and the obligation attached to it, and another thing to determine in each particular case that which is good.

In the solution of this last question, "In what does good consist in different particular cases?" exist the variableness and progressive improvement of morality. In the idea of good and in the idea of obligation attached to it exist its immutability and universality. The form of good is in every human intellect, and in this sense the savage is as moral as we; the shepherd as moral as the philosopher. Clear or confused, the idea of good exists in them with obligation attached to it. It is in the application of the form of good to a particular case that some judge better than others; from this arises a conduct of a more or less perfect moral rectitude; but virtue is not subject to these inequalities, and the agent who does what appears to him good, whether he is deceived or not, remains virtuous in the same degree.

Now, as you already know, the idea by which I translate the idea of good, is the idea of the end. I told you that it is evident to every man, first, that he has an end, then that this end is his good, and that this end is precisely that which is contained for him under the name of his true good. I ask

you, gentlemen, is it or is it not true? Do you feel that there is or that there is not an absolute equation between these two things, the end of a being and his true good? Is it not clear that every being has an end? What is this end? It is his good, his true good; in this consists the true end of every intelligent and free being, and consequently his duty. Whoever proceeds with all his energy toward his end, for which he was created, does what he ought to do.

The objection which has been made to this solution is that it is too evident; that, consequently, it teaches nothing.

That it is too evident I am delighted; that it teaches nothing I deny. It teaches this much, that it gives the method to determine in each particular case in what good consists, and to determine *a priori*, in all possible cases, which none of those systems have done that have up to the present time attempted to translate the idea of good. I said that the following propositions; "I have an end, and this end is my good: every being has an end, and for every being the accomplishment of its end is its true good; everything has an end and this end is absolute good." I said that, for every reasonable being, for every reason, these propositions were sufficient. If they are plain, it follows that obligation is attached to the translation

which they express and which they give to the word good; what I ought to do is to go toward my end; what every intelligent and free being ought to do is to proceed toward his end; in advancing toward it this intelligent and free being and myself not only do what we ought to do, go toward our good, but we contribute also to the realization of absolute good, which appears to us to be made up of the accomplishment of all the particular ends of all the beings composing the creation.

This, gentlemen, is my solution of the moral problem. I said that not only is this solution manifest, but that a method results from it to determine for all beings known to us in what good consists, and consequently what we ought to do, and therefore the rule of our conduct in all possible cases.

The fact, gentlemen, is well settled, that all beings have not the same destiny. Indeed, no one can be so senseless as to maintain that the bee has the same destiny as the lion, the lion as man, man as a tree, the tree as a mineral.

And why, gentlemen, does human reason rebel against the idea that each being has the same destiny as every other? Because it is clear to every man that each being has been organized in a particular way, and that from this organization results

the end established. In other words there is a truth as absolute as that I announced to you just now; it is that each being has received a nature appropriate to its end, and that by virtue of this nature it proceeds to its end.

From this *a priori* and evident truth results the method which I spoke to you of, of determining for every being known to us in what consists its true good. And, indeed, if it is true that each being has received its destiny or end from its nature, it follows that we can read the end of each being in its nature. And not only can we read it in its nature, but as its nature is imposed upon it, and as it can only act in conformity to its nature, we can read the destiny of each being not only in its nature but also in its development or in its life. The bee, obliged by its constitution to advance toward its end, does so. So that the revelation of its end is found as much in what it does as in its nature, by virtue of which it acts. The destination of man is revealed as much in the spectacle of human life, entirely free as man is, as in that of his nature. Hence there are two means, plain, clear, demonstrative, of determining for a being (his destination being given) his end, his true good, and if he is free and intelligent, what he ought to do: 1, the study of his nature; 2, the study of his development, of his

life. Of these two ways one is surer than the other, when we are dealing with free acts; the reason is this: we see only the external acts of a being; we estimate the springs, the motives, by force of which he does the acts, and we all know that the same act can be done for several different motives. La Rochefoucauld has shown that a multitude of actions which bear the character of virtue can be done for personal motives: so that when we see actions simply, we do not know for what reason they have been done, and the quality of an action, when we are discussing the problem of the end of a being, is entirely in the motive which has determined it. Moreover, actions are numerous and different; the motives determining them are simple and few. To proceed from actions to motives, the inquiry is difficult, perilous, full of errors; while in approaching directly the investigation of the motive, that is the examination of the nature of a being, we arrive immediately at something simple, at which we could not arrive except circuitously and with numerous chances of error, by the other method. Besides, we are free, and often pursue ends which are not our true ends. I know that in the course of a life, above all in the development of a society where a multitude of individuals act simultaneously, evil occupies a much smaller place than is thought;

that really men, although free, advance toward good, because it is their destiny; that it concerns universal order that it should be so. But those who stop at the view of the spectacle of what human beings do, meet there a source of error; thus the method which seeks the solution of the question in the study of man is truer than the method which starts from the spectacle of human society, or from the spectacle of the individual and external development. We can combine these two methods; we must however trust only the first completely.

You have, then, gentlemen, through the idea contained in that of good, a sure way of arriving at a determination of what the end of man is, while if you do not translate the idea of good as you do not know clearly to what it answers, no method is given you to ascertain this good, except a method *a posteriori*, like that of Kant, which does not give the idea of good and leaves it unknown. In my system, there exists a method to determine good. It is a method applied voluntarily or involuntarily ever since man has existed, and which constitutes morality.

Gentlemen, this inquiry about our end, by the method which I have just given you, takes place in the mind of each of us continually, involuntarily and in spite of ourselves. It is while asking ourselves this question, under one form or another,

is it proper that a being made as I am, endowed with faculties, feelings, and instincts, should do such a thing in a given case?—it is, I repeat, while asking ourselves such a question, that we judge ourselves and regulate our conduct. All this takes place in us without a premeditated design. There is not, however, a single conscience which does not contain this element, without which there would be no possible solution. It is true that in a great many cases we guide ourselves by received notions; but the notions received have been given and produced by the same process, and afterward consecrated by the unanimous consent of civilized nations, they have passed into maxims of common sense, and it is no longer necessary to reach these maxims by the method which produced them, in order to convince persons who make use of them. In every conscience there is a great number of these received ideas of what ought to be done in ordinary cases; but if a case comes for which these maxims are not given, we are obliged to apply the method which I have just given you. As soon as the conception that we are in this world for some purpose, for a certain end, is introduced into the mind, whether clearly or vaguely, then arises for this being the idea of good and the idea of duty. Up to that time, gentlemen, we obeyed the impulses of our nature. Later, reason, perceiving all

the errors committed by the instinctive course to attain our happiness, inferred that we must make an estimate of the satisfaction of our desires and propensities. But in this proposition, that we must do what is best adapted to satisfy our nature, it had discovered nothing which appeared to be the light—the rule of the law of obligation. Then, slowly or otherwise, reason conceives a new idea—the idea that we are in this world for some purpose; that we have an end; that being free and intelligent, we are charged with our own conduct. The day that this idea appears, under one form or another, we feel an obligation, and the form of good is given; for, as has been said, good is that for which we have been placed in this world. It remains for us to determine the matter of good; that is, to find out in what our end consists and what we ought to do to accomplish it in all the principal situations in which man is placed, and to see, in each particular case, how we should conduct ourselves. You perceive that the form appears before the matter of good: you perceive that we commence by learning what the idea of good includes, before knowing what should be done to accomplish it for the particular case, and for the different situations of life; and this is the reason that the form of the idea of good, or the conception that we have an end, and that this is our true good, and

that this is what we ought to do, growing up in all minds, is found everywhere, in all men, whatever may be the degree of the development of the individual; while in the question of learning how we ought to act to attain our true good for every particular case, there is a variety, a diversity, a progress proportioned to the progress of civilization: that is to say, to the development of the human understanding. It is a troublesome and nice inquiry to discern in each particular case what ought to be done to advance toward one's end, what is the course best adapted to the end of man. It is still more difficult to determine in advance, abstracting the particular good, what are the general laws of good for every human situation, or, in other words, of the accomplishment of our end, of our order. This is precisely the object of this course of lectures; what I have already done, was to establish the idea of the form of good; what I shall soon do, in describing personal morality, positive right, the law of nature and natural religion, will be to ascertain the matter of right. But long before the matter of good is known, the idea of obligation is attached to the idea of good.

I may be or may not be deceived, but provided my intention is good, I am a moral being, I am virtuous. You see that there is in the idea of good a form and a matter; you see that the form is

given to all men, obscurely, confusedly perhaps; that it brings with it obligation, that it is prior to the matter; that by it, in its name, we can determine the matter of good. Consequently we cannot determine the matter of good without having the idea of its form. Thus, not only does the form precede the matter, but the matter presupposes the form. Thus the element *a priori* is anterior to the empirical element, and this *a priori* element is the same for all cases.

Now, as I have exhibited to you these general ideas, I have only to develop them; but first I wish to show you two things: first, the order in which the different conceptions, of which the form of the idea of good is entirely composed, succeed each other and appear in the human mind—the psychological order; then I shall arrange these different conceptions logically, in such a way as to put them into a system. There is this difference between the two orders—the psychological and logical orders—that in the psychological order we commence with the particular. In fact, it is with the particular that everything commences in the mind; we then advance from the particular to the universal by successive steps; while in the logical order we start from that which is presupposed by nothing and which everything presupposes. The logical is the opposite of the psychological order. I shall give

you a description of the manner in which the moral revelation takes place, if I can call it such, in the soul of every man, and then all the conceptions composing the moral revelation being made clear with the history of their appearance, I shall place first that which ought to be last, and last that which ought to be first; that is, I shall arrange these conceptions in such a way that those which are last shall be placed first, and that, by an imperceptible descent, we shall descend from what is universal to that which is less universal—to the matter of the moral conceptions: that is, to the particular. To-day I shall not attempt this explanation, as it is too late. I prefer to unfold a point of view which belongs to all that I have just told you, and which deserves to be presented to you. I do not wish to mutilate the psychological history of the development of the moral revelation. I prefer to reserve it for another lecture, when I shall have sufficient time.

The conception that I have an end is not the only one which springs up in me when moral ideas enter my mind. That conception brings others, which are metaphysical and with which it is strictly connected. Thus, I conceive not only that I have an end, and that this end is my good, but, as I said a short time ago, I conceive also that every being has an end, and the entire creation, too. I

conceive, besides, that the creation being composed of all the particular beings, there is not a single being the accomplishment of whose end does not concern and does not contribute to the total and definite end of the creation. So that this conception does not remain a particular law of the human individual; it generalizes itself and becomes the universal law of every being, which shows us perfectly that this conception is not a datum of experience, but is one of the *a priori* data of reason, which springs up suddenly in our intellect, by means of a particular occasion, and which scarcely produced becomes general and applicable to all. Such is the great work—the reach, the character of this conception; it is as universal, as absolute, as much *a priori* as the principle of causality, or any other *a priori* principle of metaphysics.

It follows from this conception of every being having an end, that the method by which the end of a human being can be determined is applied to the determination of the end of every being, and not only to the determination of the end of every being, but to the determination of the end even of the creation. As the *end* and *good* are the same thing, it follows that this method can not only be applied to the determination of the good of the individual, but to the determination of the good of every being, and to the determination of abso-

lute good, which is nothing else than the total end of the entire creation.

As it is impossible that the end of a being, or the end of all beings, is to be worked out for the human intellect by any other means than that indicated by this method, you see immediately the limit which results from it for human knowledge, in regard to the good of other beings and good in itself.

Indeed, gentlemen, the condition without which the end of a being cannot be determined, nor consequently its good, being the knowledge of the nature of this being, or that I have before my eyes the spectacle of its development, it follows that the beings whose natures I cannot penetrate, or the laws of whose development escape me, are unknown to me, and that their good cannot be conceived by me, it follows that every being into whose nature I can penetrate only imperfectly, whose development or life is known to me imperfectly, escapes me also, and that I can determine only in an imperfect manner in what its end consists, and consequently its good; finally, it results from this clearly, that I have the idea of absolute good, and that I know its form; but in what does this good consist? I am completely ignorant of it, and I shall never know it in the limits of this life. Thus, gentlemen, I know, that the universe has an end; I know that this end is the thought of God; that God being

necessary, existing by himself, there is nothing voluntary in this end. I know that this end being the absolute good is sacred; I prostrate myself before this end, but I do not know in what it consists: I know its form, I do not know its matter, and I cannot conjecture it.

Indeed, gentlemen, is a demonstration needed for such an assertion? Is it not evident that the creation comprehends, or rather is comprehended in, infinite space? Is it not clear that the specimen which I perceive does not allow me to draw conclusions as to the whole? Is it not evident, moreover, that the creation, such as it exists actually in the midst of infinite space, may be only one of the thousand creations which have succeeded one another, and which will succeed one another in the infinite bosom of time? And even if I could succeed in determining in what consists the end of the present universe, it would not follow that this is the end for the thought of God; for the present creation is, perhaps, only a link in the chain of an infinity of creations, leading to an infinite end which will never be known. Whoever, then, should attempt to create a system to explain his ideas of the end of the creation, that is, of good in itself, would be perfectly absurd and ridiculous. No one knows it and no one can know it. I know that this creation, as vast as it is in space, as infi-

nite as it is in duration, I know (and I know it certainly, absolutely) that this creation is not a mere fancy, is not a mere chance thing, but it has an end. I know that this end is absolute good. I know that the end of every created being is only an element of this end. I know, therefore, that this absolute end, and all these elements are to be held sacred by me, but this is all, here I stop. When I have to act, as I am ignorant of the end, I can act only in virtue of the elements of this end which are known to me and are determined. If I knew this end, all the elements, all the particular goods composing it, I could act in view of all this: I can only act, then, in view of those which I do know. Which do I know? I know the particular end of the beings whose natures I can determine. I know my nature. Not only do I know my nature or can know it, but I am also acquainted with the spectacle which the development of human life presents in the men who surround me, in the societies in the midst of which I live, and in those the development of which history gives a record. I possess, then, all the means possible to ascertain what the end of man is. If I ascertain what the end of man is, I ascertain also the end of each of the individuals constituting society. Here I have not only the form of the idea of good, but I have, besides, the matter, or I can have it, consequently

I have an element of absolute good which I know. I must consider this element of absolute good when I act, I must respect it, contribute to its accomplishment; for I know what course to pursue, as I know it. Is it the same with all other beings filling the universe? Not exactly. In fact, not being in the consciousness of those beings, I can know their end but imperfectly; thus, the end for which these beings exist in the creation, the intention of God in placing them there, the part which they perform, all this is known to me very imperfectly. In this case my duty is but imperfectly known. And when beings are concerned whose nature is entirely unknown to me, my duty ceases entirely.

Another consideration to which I shall return, and which it is well to bring forward, is this: I am a free and intelligent being, consequently, if I have an end, I can understand it; having comprehended it, I may or may not accomplish it; I am, therefore, responsible for its accomplishment. Why? Because I am intelligent. Therefore, my fellow beings, intelligent and free like myself, are responsible for their destiny; their destiny is, then, sacred to me, because it would be unjust to prevent them from accomplishing their destiny. Hence the origin of the idea of right; it is to be found nowhere else. When we deal with plants or with minerals, these undoubtedly exist for some pur-

pose, but I do not know for what. Besides, they are not free and intelligent, they are not charged with their destiny, consequently, there is no injustice in violating it. All depends on that; if it was necessary, if it concerned the work of God, that the destiny of these beings should be accomplished, He would have protected them and placed them out of the reach of man. This is the fundamental idea which regulates our duties toward other beings.

I give you this idea to show you how fruitful is the method that I have just noticed in explaining the idea of good, how well it gives the principle of all the modifications of right, of all the parts of morality, and what sound deductions we can hope to draw from it, if we apply it correctly.

LECTURE VI.

THEORETICAL VIEWS CONTINUED.

I COMMENCED the former lecture by showing to you the ideas which seem to me to contain the true solution of the moral problem. After laying down the problem in its simplest form, and recalling to your mind the insufficiency of the numerous solutions that have been given, I submitted mine to you and showed that there issued from it a method to determine the duties of man in all cases and in all possible situations.

I am going, gentlemen, to take up again these ideas more in detail in this lecture: I shall exhibit them, in the first place, in their logical or synthetical connection: then, I shall try to delineate the pyschological history of their appearance in the human intellect.

The moral problem finds its solution in a certain number of truths evident in themselves, conceived by reason *a priori*, the immediate consequence of which is a plain definition of good, which definition gives us a precise method to determine in what

good consists for every possible being. What are these truths, gentlemen, and how do they produce the double consequence that I have just indicated? I shall attempt to tell you in a few words.

The first of these truths, gentlemen, is the principle that every being has an end. Like the principle of causality, it has all the same evidence, the same universality, the same necessity, and our reason cannot conceive any more of an exception to the one than the other. It has, also, all its fecundity, for on the day that it enters into our intellect it gives birth to other truths impliedly contained in it, which throw upon the end of things the same light that is thrown upon our origin by the truths emanating from the principle of causality.

In fact, if it is true that every being has an end, it is also true that I have one, that you have one, that there is not a created being but what has one also; now, in casting our eyes on the world, or that part of the world which we see, it is evident that if all beings have an end, this end is not the same for all, as each of those that we can observe is developed in its own way and aspires to an end which is peculiar to it. From the moment we have conceived that every being has an end, we gather from experience the second truth, that this end varies in different beings, and that each being has

its own, which is peculiar; this second discovery soon leads us to a third—the relation existing between the end of each being and its nature, the diversity of ends corresponding to the diversity of natures, and the peculiarity of the former corresponding to the peculiarity of the latter. In fact, if each being has a peculiar end, each being must have received an organization adapted to this end and which qualifies it to attain the end; there would be a contradiction if a certain end should be imposed upon a being and its nature not contain the means of realizing it. Experience teaches us, gentlemen, that this contradiction does not exist in the creation; experience everywhere exhibits to us the nature of beings in harmony with their destination and a perfect resemblance between the diversity of natures and diversity of ends; and this third truth, that the end of each being is conformable to its nature, is clothed in our understanding with the same assurances of universality as the other two.

By its light, gentlemen, we behold a method to determine the true end of each being: for if the end of beings is an idea purely—invisible to the observer—their nature is a reality which can fall under our observation. And as the nature is always appropriate to the end, we can find in the first the revelation of the second. There is, then, a

way to discover the destination of beings. This way is the study of their nature, and whenever the study of their nature is possible, the way can be ascertained.

To these truths are soon added two others which have not less proof and are not less comprehensive than the first—one is that, if each being has its end, the creation itself, which comprehends all beings, has one also. This creation, it is true, is beyond our knowledge; we seize only a fragment of it, and this fragment even we know only in a moment of its duration; the work of God fills space and time, and what we can seize of it is only a point in one, a moment in the other. But if the creation was infinite and its duration eternal, the principle would apply and would persuade our reason inevitably that it has an end. Now, this truth cannot appear to us without being connected with the preceding truths, and by this connection producing another. If the creation has an end, if each being has its own, and if the creation is but the aggregation of all beings, the relation existing between the whole and its parts must exist between the end of the whole and the end of each of the parts of the whole.

The end of each being is, then, an element of the end of the creation; the creation only a resultant of the particular ends of all the beings which peo-

ple and compose the universe, which, in their turn, are only the different means contributing to the accomplishment of this total and supreme end: a final conception not less necessary and not less evident than all the others, flowing, like them, from the absolute principle that everything has an end, which principle, by an inevitable relation, attributes the end of all possible beings to a consequence of the creation, and forms from all these scattered ends a harmonious whole, the concurrence of which aspires to a single end, the same which God established when he created the universe.

These truths cast a strong light upon the creation and make it appear to us under a new aspect. As we cannot comprehend at all the origin of things without the idea of cause and principle, so we have no comprehension of the end of things without the idea of end, and without the principle that every being, and in every being every movement, every act and every phenomenon has its end. By the light of the second truth, the world becomes one in its destination, as by the light of the first it becomes one in its principle. The creation appears to us like an immense whole, which advances toward a single result, and which advances by the movement of each of its parts toward a particular end—element of the total end.

Thus, gentlemen, the whole is connected together in the created universe, and each being is connected with the whole and becomes an integral element of it. There is but one cause, but one end. Between this cause and this end is placed the creation which issues from the former and advances to the latter, which issues from the former by the simultaneous emanation or the successive emanations of all its parts and which proceeds toward the latter by the simultaneous movement or the successive movements of all its parts. Such is the aspect of the world in the light of the two principles, that everything has a cause and that everything has an end; without these two principles nothing but an inextricable chaos would be presented to us. God has given us an understanding of it, in endowing our reason with these two conceptions, which contain the explanation of the enigma, and the simplicity of the means is not less admirable than the grandeur of the result.

But, gentlemen, we are far from having exhausted this result; other ideas and other truths still spring up from the principle that everything has its end. Let us follow out the analysis of these truths and these ideas.

The first which I shall speak of is the idea of order and the idea of end. The idea of order, in fact, is only an emanation, a natural and inevitable

consequence of the idea of end. If the creation has an end, and if this end is only the resultant of the particular ends of the beings composing it, the life of the creation is nothing else than its movement toward this supreme end, and this movement in turn is resolved into the movements of all created beings toward their particular ends. From the accomplishment of all the particular ends—an accomplishment which is going on simultaneously in all the points of space, and successively in all the moments of time, by the harmonious concurrence of all beings, performing, each in its sphere and at its time, the part imposed upon it—results clearly the universal life or the accomplishment of the total end of the creation. Now, gentlemen, this universal and eternal movement of each thing toward the end which God has assigned to it, and of all things toward the supreme end, the single and definite end of the creation, this movement, evidently regular, since it has an end, is precisely what we call order. There is this difference between the end of the creation and universal order, that the end is the aim, while order is the regular movement of everything toward this end.

By the eternal laws of things, we mean nothing but this regular movement, and we are correct in saying that these laws result from the nature of things and the relations derived from them, since

this regular movement is determined in each being by its organization, which is fitted to the peculiar part to be fulfilled—to the particular end to be realized in the whole work. The existence of this order is indisputable for our reason, and the conception which our reason has of it is a necessary consequence of the principle that everything has an end. Thus, the conception of order is not less inevitable than the conception of the end; only the conception of order presupposes the other logically, for it cannot be comprehended, it cannot be clear except when the idea of the end is produced in our intellect.

And now, gentlemen, if absolute order is the regular movement of the creation toward its end, it is evident that the order for each being is the regular movement of this being toward its particular end; and as the absolute end of things results from the accomplishment of all the particular ends, so absolute and universal order results from the realization of all the particular orders.

Thus moves on the world, gentlemen; behold the mystery such as it is revealed to us by the simple and fruitful principle, that all has an end.

Up to the present time, gentlemen, we have seen nothing moral in all the conceptions that I have set forth, and yet these conceptions contain and produce morality. In themselves they are only

speculative truths which reveal to our reason what is, without teaching it what is to be done; but such is their nature that when they have appeared in our intellect, the idea of what is good, and, consequently what must be done, springs up necessarily. Indeed, gentlemen, it is impossible for our reason not to pass from the idea of an end to the idea of good in itself, and from the idea of order to that of moral good. The equation which makes this transition necessary is so absolute, that by substituting the idea of good for that of the end, I could have explained to you all the conceptions I have just made known to you without taking from them the least degree of evidence; you would have accepted them under their moral as you have accepted them under their speculative form; only, while compelling conviction, they would have preserved, under the first, the obscurity we found in the idea of good, an obscurity that all the systems criticised by us have not been able to dissipate, which impelled us to seek in our turn for a translation of this idea, and which the idea of an end has alone the power to cause to disappear entirely.

Few words will be sufficient to place in a clear light the absolute equation existing between these two ideas, which makes one the exact translation of the other.

If intelligent and free beings exist in the world,

they would have not only an end assigned them and a nature adapted to this end like other beings—in other words, they would not be merely fragments of the creation, and their end an element of the absolute end of things; the intellect and liberty they have received would elevate them above the multitude and produce in them peculiar phenomena not produced in other creatures.

In fact, being intelligent, it is given them to comprehend the world of which they form a part; it is given them to conceive that it has an end, that all beings have an end and that the end of each being is an element of the end of all. Being free, it is given them, moreover, to realize voluntarily the end they have conceived, to coöperate in the accomplishment of the absolute end of things and to unite themselves to universal order—that is, to the universal movement of all beings toward an end. And not only can they do so in themselves, but if some office has been given them over other beings, they can act out of themselves, by respecting the accomplishment of their ends and by assisting the accomplishment as much as is in their power. Now, gentlemen, what has been given to these privileged beings—to these beings endowed with intelligence and liberty—to do, is precisely that which they ought to do, that which they are bound and obliged to do. In other words, if there

are intelligent and free beings in the world, the law of their liberty is evidently to contribute to the realization of the universal end—to contribute to it in themselves and out of themselves as much as possible; and why is this, gentlemen? The reason is, that, if it is evident that every being has an end, it is not less evident that the good of this being is an end itself; that if it is clear that the creation has an end, it is not less clear that absolute good is this end itself. The reason is, in a word, that to the eyes of reason there is a perfect, absolute, necessary equation between the idea of end and the idea of good, an equation which cannot but be conceived as soon as the principle of finality has appeared, and which transforms all the truths purely speculative issuing from this principle, which I have just enumerated, into as many practical, or as many moral, truths corresponding.

If it is true the world has an end, it is true, also, and manifestly true, that this end is absolute good. If it is true that each being has a special end, it is true, also, that the good peculiar to this being is this end. If it is true that there exists between the end of each being and the end of all, such a correlation that the end of each being is only an element of the end of the whole, it is also true that the good of each being is only an element of absolute good, and that thus the good of each being has

the same nature and the same value as absolute good itself: it is true, in a word, that these ideas of end and of good make but one, and are only two forms, two expressions for one and the same fact. Now, to what is the idea of obligation attached inevitably? To the idea of what is good in itself and absolutely; and what is good in itself and absolutely? We were ignorant of it; but at present we know what it is, we conceive it clearly; good in itself is nothing else than the end of God in the creation, nothing else than the absolute end of things; this end appears to us from that moment as sacred, and with it all the different ends which are elements of it, and among these ends ours which is one of them. The accomplishment of our end or of our good, with which we are charged, since we have been made free and intelligent, and the accomplishment of the end or the good of other beings, as much as we can contribute to it—this, then, is our duty, our rule, our legitimate law. This, gentlemen, is morality; we sought for it, behold it found. It arises, as you see, from a certain number of truths *a priori*, which, in making their appearance in our understanding, illuminate the creation with a searching light, reveal the meaning of it, solve the problem and unfold its law. Experience excites in us the manifestation of these truths, but it does not produce them; they exist

a priori, and they are, therefore, universal, absolute, necessarily conceived. It is a gift of God placed in us, like all the truths of our nature, and designed to render intelligible those things which observation shows us. If you suppress these truths, there is no longer any morality: our law vanishes with that of the world. The idea of this law arises from the conception that everything has an end, and that the end of all things is their good.

And now, gentlemen, I wish you to notice one thing—that all this is true, that all this can be conceived without our knowing not only what the end of the creation is, but even what the end of any being is, and what ours is. Whatever the end of the creation may be, the creation has an end, and this end is absolute good; whatever may be the end of each being, there is not a being but what has one, and this end is its good: whatever may be the relation of the end of such being with that of the whole, the first of these ends is an element of the other, and consequently, of absolute good, whatever may be the end of an intelligent and free being, this end is its law, and to accomplish it is its duty: therefore, whatever may be our end, as we are intelligent and free, it is not only our true good, but our law, our rule, our duty. If we are surrounded by other beings, whatever these beings may be, and whatever may be their end, we are

bound to respect it and to aid them in accomplishing it; for it is, like our own, an element of absolute good—which it is the law of every free and intelligent being to realize as far as possible.

Such are the sovereign and absolute decrees promulgated by our reason independently of all empirical notions; these decrees are prior and superior to the questions, "in what consist the end of each being, our own, the end of the creation?" and it must be so, since the interest we have in solving these questions and the idea, even, of proposing them, flow from them.

Whatever solutions the questions may receive, the absolute truth of these decrees cannot be changed, it will continue entire, even if these questions are never solved, and it is in this, gentlemen, that the distinction is clearly shown—the distinction I laid down between the form of morality and its matter. The form of morality is wholly in the *a priori* conceptions that I have enumerated, and this form is morality itself, for these conceptions decide everything, regulate everything *a priori*. The formula of good in itself, the formula of the good of each being, the formula of the relation between the good of each being and good in itself, the formula of the mission of each being and the duties of this mission for intelligent and free beings —all these formulas containing the solution of the

moral problem are given by these conceptions, so that we have only to apply them to man or to any other existing being, to determine, by the method derived, the special good of this being and his duty, if he is intelligent and free. It is these conceptions, gentlemen, which constitute the moral equality of all men. The inequality of civilization is great among nations; it is great in the bosom of each nation, between individuals; besides, the most enlightened individual of the most advanced nation will never penetrate but a small portion of the mysteries of the creation; not only will the end of a multitude of beings escape him, but he will always be ignorant of the end of the universe. If, then, morality depended on the knowledge of ends alone, it would be under a condition inaccessible to humanity, and which men and nations would approach only at very unequal and different distances; but this knowledge concerns only the correctness of practice, and has nothing to do with morality. Morality is wholly in the conceptions I have enumerated, which are in a state of clearness or obscurity in the minds of all men, and cannot but be there; for otherwise it would be as impossible to act and to conduct one's self in this life, as it would be to pass judgment upon bodies, if the notion of space were wanting.

I may be ignorant of what my end consists—I

may know it very imperfectly, and even in these limits I may know in a very obscure and confused manner; it matters little; I am a moral being from the fact alone that I know I have an end and my duty consists in accomplishing that end. It is true I cannot act until after determining what this end is: but this determination, which teaches me in each case what my good or duty is, does not reveal to me the fact that both exist for me. This I knew before; and solely because I knew it before, have I been able to seek and find in what they consist. In fact the idea of seeking it and the method for its discovery have been suggested to me by this previous conception, and presupposes it. To find out in particular cases what good is, we must know there is good, and to discover it we must possess the general character of good. Now, all this is in the form of morality, that is, in the *a priori* truths teaching me that the world has an end which is good, and that I have an end which is my good, and that, like every intelligent and free being, I am bound to accomplish my good. It remains for me to learn what is my end, and, this end determined, to discover in each particular case what conduct leads to this end—what other carries me from it. This double determination is the matter of morality, and the method to carry it into effect issues also from the form. For I knew *a priori* that if there were

beings, their nature would be adapted to their end, and that thus their end would be deduced from their nature; and I knew likewise before all experience, that actions were only good so far as they were conformable to the end of the being, and that they must be judged by this rule. These two conceptions embrace the whole method of moral determinations.

You perceive, gentlemen, the difference between the form and the matter of morality—a difference that can be found in every particular moral judgment: for any particular moral judgment is only the application of the form of morality to a matter or a particular case.

These conceptions having been thus presented to us in their logical order and with all their consequences, it remains for us to find out how they appear successively in the mind, and at what different degrees of comprehensiveness and clearness the revelation ceases in different men. In a word, after giving you the clear and complete result, we must tell in what manner it is produced in the human intellect generally, and what forms more and more complete, more and more precise, it puts on successively, and can preserve in particular intellects.

I told you, gentlemen, that we commence with the instincts, continue with the empirical reason

and end with the reason properly so called—that is, we commence with instinct, continue with selfishness, and finish with morality.

We must not, however, consider this as a positive thing: in fact there is rather a concomitance than succession between the selfish point of view and the moral. But logically, the selfish point of view is inferior, and ought therefore to precede the moral point of view. Our nature at the beginning, and a long time before reason comes, aspires instinctively to its end. This blind movement, which analysis separates later into special instincts, solicits our will, and as it is not impeded in its action by any force, determines it; the satisfaction of the instincts follows, which is accompanied by pleasure. Such is the primitive determination, and this determination, far from being contrary to the end of man in its tendencies and effects, is in perfect conformity to it. Indeed, instinct is nothing else than the cry of our organization, than the voice of our nature, which, from the mere fact of living, aspires to that for which it was made and advances toward its end before comprehending it. When reason comes it aids, if I may say so, the phenomenon of the primitive and spontaneous development of our nature; it sees the instincts aspiring to certain ends, desiring them, and the will and activity attaining them when they can. As it

is a faculty of comprehension, it perceives that the means employed by our nature to satisfy the instincts are imperfect. In fact, the instincts being variable and numerous, their action on the will is inconstant and capricious, and there results a complete absence of regular sequence, and consequently much weakness in the determinations of the latter. Besides, the strongest instinct always obtains satisfaction, which is often opposed to the greatest satisfaction of our nature, or the whole of our instincts. Reason corrects this error, and corrects it to the advantage of the greatest satisfaction of our nature. Reason then substitutes the end of the instinct; it does not change it, it does not explain it; it leaves it just as it was. What it does change is simply the manner of attaining it; it substitutes for the natural mode one of calculation—a true mode, infinitely preferable to the other for the interest of the end pursued. The end itself, that which is pursued by selfishness, like that to which instinct aspires, is the greatest satisfaction of our nature, nothing else. My nature says, through the voice of instinct, "I wish to be satisfied," and the will obeys. In the selfish determination, reason grants that we must satisfy our nature, content our instincts; but it denies that the natural means are good, and introduces another; this is the difference. What is the general formula of the instinctive and selfish judg-

ment? That it is good to satisfy our nature: in other words, that good is the satisfaction of the desires of our nature. Now, reason does not find this maxim to be evident; therefore in following it we do not yield obedience to a truth, nor consequently to this maxim itself, which would have weight cnly if it expressed a truth, but simply to the impulses of the desires of our nature. That which our nature desires, both in the instinctive and selfish states, is the satisfaction of the desires importuning it—the enjoyment of the pleasures which it foresees, nothing more; for the maxim that "the satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature is good," wanting proof, is not at all a motive to action.

A motive of action can only be a clear definition of good; for we understand that if we knew the true good, we would be obliged to accomplish it, and our rule would be found. The reason of there being no obligation in the selfish point of view, is that this point of view only rises, and can only rise, to a maxim having no proof—to a definition of good which is not a clear definition—to a definition which is not an equation. If the satisfaction of our nature formed for our reason an evident equation with the vague idea of good which is in it, the satisfaction of our nature would become on that day obligatory upon us, and from that moment we would act reasonably, that is, by virtue of a

conception of the reason. So long as we have not arrived at this clear equation, we do not act by virtue of the views of our reason, we do not act in view of a truth, we do not act in virtue of a motive, but simply by virtue of an instinct. There must arise in us ideas which produce a clear definition of good, and which then impose upon us the obligation of doing something in the name of this evident definition. So long as this phenomenon does not appear in our mind, our conduct will always be determined by the feelings, and will not be the conduct of a reasonable being. It is precisely because our reason, in presence of this maxim, (which is the sum of what can be produced by selfishness) is not satisfied with this maxim, that it demands the reason of this truth. This is the torment produced in us by the question—Must we do what our nature desires? is it good or bad to do it? It is this inquietude which causes to spring up, so to speak, in our reason, the truth explaining it, and which gives the solution required. Evidently the first step by which our reason gets out of this embarrassing question, is the conception that we have an end. Indeed, gentlemen, in the perpetual succession of resolutions to be taken, of determinations to be suppressed, of which the life of man is composed, it cannot but happen sooner or later, in one of these deliberations, in one of these cases, where

I must act in one way or another, that there suddenly appears to my reason the idea that certain of the views proposed accord with my nature, are conformable to my destination, while the opposite views are contrary to this destination, are repugnant to my true nature. The day on which, on a particular occasion (and it is always necessarily on a particular occasion), that this idea comes to me, I am enlightened by the truth that my nature being organized in a certain way, there is an end for the organization of my nature—that is to say, there is an end for which this organization has been given, and on that day I conceive, not that everything has an end, but that I have one. Thus, gentlemen, the conception that in a particular case such an end is conformable to my nature, or its destination, or its organization, and such other is not, this particular conception produces, by an immediate abstraction, the conception that I have an end. If such an end is in my destination, in such a particular case, this can only be because I have a destination. Thus, gentlemen, I rise from the particular to the less particular—from the view that such an end is conformable to my destination. I rise to the view that I have a destination or an end. This, gentlemen, is necessarily the first step in the moral conception.

I cannot, gentlemen, comprehend that such an

end is conformable to my nature or to my destination, without feeling that this end is good—without feeling that I am compelled to advance toward this end. To this idea of destination and of end, however special may be the case in which this appearance takes place, is necessarily attached the idea of good, and the idea of obligation: for in the particular as in the universal, and in the universal as in the particular, there is an equation between end, good, and duty. Then, gentlemen, on the very day, at the very moment, at which from this very particular application—from this very particular conception arises the less particular conception that I have an end—on that very day to the idea that I have an end, is connected the idea that this end is my good—that this good is my duty. But this first step cannot be taken without the light which exists in me being immediately extended to all beings, and particularly to my fellow beings, with whom I am brought into immediate contact. When I have conceived that I have an end: that this end is my good: that I must accomplish this end—it is impossible for me not to comprehend that my fellow beings have an end like myself, and that it is their duty to tend toward it constantly.

Indeed it is only true that I have an end because it is true that everything has an end. There is then

but one step from the idea that I have an end, to the idea that everything has an end. It is impossible for me to dwell any length of time upon the idea that I have an end, without the universal truth that everything has an end appearing to me. In what way do we rise to this universal truth? From the fact that we have an end we infer by virtue of the similitude and equality existing between the nature of our fellow beings and our own, that our fellow beings have also an end, and that these two ends are alike; and, if we reflect at all, we pass immediately to all other beings contained in the creation, and which are in our neighborhood, to animals, plants—to all things; we pass immediately, I repeat, to all other beings, and we feel that for them, as for ourselves, the truth that everything has an end is realized, so that immediately the universality of this truth—its application to all possible beings—enters into our minds. But a difference strikes us, and cannot but strike us; it is, that if our end, which is our good, imposes upon us the duty of advancing toward it, this depends upon a cause, upon a circumstance—namely, that we comprehend and that we are free: that is, capable of realizing or not realizing it. Now, in casting our eyes around us, in the narrow circle of our knowledge, we fall in with beings who, like us, are intelligent and free, and others in which these peculiar-

ities evidently do not exist. This difference, gentlemen, cannot but strike us.

If it strikes us, it cannot but produce certain consequences in our intellect. From the fact that I am free and intelligent, it follows clearly that I have a special mission, under my own responsibility, of accomplishing my end; it is clear that I am not a spring to which a fatal movement has been given, and which is not called to participate in the accomplishment of its end. I am a being created free, so that I may or may not proceed toward my end as I may wish. Consequently, I am a being charged with the duty and the right of proceeding toward my end. If this is true in regard to myself, it is also true in regard to my fellow beings; for the marks of intelligence and of liberty are too manifest in them for me to be deceived in regard to these two truths.

But if there are beings who have neither intelligence nor liberty, I cannot conceive in them the duty of accomplishing their end; for it is accomplished without their interference, since they are not organized in such a way as to interfere in the accomplishment of their destiny. I am therefore struck by a remarkable difference existing among the beings surrounding me in the creation. I find some of them subject to a duty, others not; the first are persons, the latter things. If things ac-

complish their end, it is God who accomplishes it in them. If my fellow beings accomplish their end, it is because they will it and in accomplishing it they fulfill a duty. If they fulfill a duty in accomplishing their end, if they are enjoined to accomplish it under their own responsibility, like myself, it would be unjust on my part to oppose their liberty, and on their part to oppose the accomplishment of my destiny; from this arises the idea that they have the right to accomplish their end, and the idea that I have the right to accomplish mine. From this comes the idea that I am in duty bound to respect their vocation, and that they must respect mine—from this, in a word, come the ideas of right, of justice, of injustice. There are a great many philosophers who have confounded the idea of justice and injustice with good. The idea of justice and injustice has no place except in the relations existing between free beings; it is a duty of relation, which would disappear if the relation between free and intelligent beings disappeared. In this case good and duty would still exist; but there would be no longer right, justice and injustice.

The Scotch, who speak of the just and the unjust instead of the good and bad, deal with a particular branch of morality, and not with the whole of it; so that they are in a state of complete confusion between the two ideas—the idea of the

unjust and the just, and the idea of good and evil.

This is the second step by which we rise from the idea that we have an end to the idea that all beings have an end, and to the distinction given us by experience, between the beings charged with the accomplishment of their end and those which are not so charged.

A third step now cannot but be taken, whether clearly or confusedly matters but little. It is, that if all beings have an end, it is impossible for this grand whole (which is the creation, the limits and duration of which we are ignorant) not to have one also. The idea that each thing has an end leads us inevitably to the idea that the whole has an end. The same principle and the same truth give the two results, or rather this does not make two truths—two results—it makes but one.

But, gentlemen, the idea that the whole has an end is inseparable from the idea that this end is a resultant or ought to be a resultant of all the particular ends ; the whole, like the creation, is a resultant of all the particular beings. From this, gentlemen, comes the idea of good, or of the total end of things. Do not think, gentlemen, that there is an immediate equation between the total good, or the sum of all the goods composing the end of the whole, and the idea of absolute good, or the idea of

good in itself. No, gentlemen, there is a selection to be made in order to pass from the idea of the total good, which is the sum or resultant of all the goods, to the idea of good in itself; or the idea of absolute good.

The step is taken through the consideration that, beyond the total good there is no good; because beyond the end of the whole there is no other end. So that the end of the whole corresponds to the cause of the whole: that is, to God, who is the Being existing through no other being—existing by himself and existing necessarily. Now, gentlemen, the end of a necessary being is necessary like that being; and as a necessary being (and there is only one) is the absolute being through whom all things are, it follows that the end of this being, or the end established by this being for its manifestation, that is, for the creation, is an absolute end, and therefore an absolute good, and consequently good in itself. Whence it follows that all forming part of it, all that contributes in the creation to this definite, absolute and necessary end, to this definite, absolute and necessary good, makes part of it consequently, and is absolute and necessary in itself. Our reason, an emanation of the divine reason, recognizes the laws common to all reasons, and recognizes its source and its full development in the reason of God. Universal order, by which the cre-

ation of God proceeds to the absolute and definite end of things, this universal order is nothing else than the whole of the absolute laws of the absolute reason of God, and consequently of every individual reason; which causes our reason, without going through all these reasonings and all this metaphysics, immediately, as soon as the idea of universal order is conceived, as soon as this idea is assimilated with the idea of God, and even before, to prostrate itself before this idea, to recognize it as obligatory and sacred. It follows, however, that its true law, that its mission in accomplishing its own end and the end of other beings, is nothing else than the coöperation and connection with universal order in itself; so that by this progress upward the individual being is elevated from that which is the most particular in the moral conceptions to that which these moral conceptions consider the most universal; that is, is elevated from the most limited of the particular ends to the idea of absolute good, a consequence of universal order, which is nothing else than the expression of God's thought, or the expression of reason in itself. This is the way, but it is not given to all human creatures or to all human intellects to pass over it. Far from it, the largest part make the first step only; but in this first step is contained impliedly all the rest; and this is the reason that the view

alone of a certain particular end being conformable to my destination, causes me to feel constrained to advance toward this particular end. I feel obliged because I consider it as good. You must not think, gentlemen, that the feeling of obligation is derived from what is particular in the conception produced; it is derived not from what is particular in the conception produced, that is, from the matter of the conception, but from what there is absolute in this conception—that is, from its form. Notice, gentlemen, that if in a particular circumstance a certain particular end seems to us conformable to our end, and consequently suggests to us the idea that we are obliged to advance toward this particular good, this comes from the fact that the idea of the end is equal to that of good, and that to the idea of good is connected the idea of obligation. Now, why is the idea of obligation attached to the idea of good? Because good in the particular is nothing else than the element or an element of good in itself, with which is evidently, clearly, connected the idea of obligation for the reason. What is sacred in my good is not so because it is my good, but because it makes a part of good; and the fact that it is a part of good is not because it is equal to my end, but because my end is a part of the absolute end of things. Therefore, in every particular end, there

exists the absolute end of all things; for every particular end is an element of this end. In every particular good, therefore, there is absolute good; for every particular good is an element of absolute good; to the idea of each end is attached, then, the idea of obligation, because it is attached to the idea of the absolute end, and the whole idea of the end is attached to that of good. As the whole idea of the end is contained in every judgment declaring that a certain thing is good, the obligation appears to me equally strong in the particular conception, that a certain end is conformable to my end, and in this other more general conception, that I have an end, and in this other universal conception, that each and everything has an end. Thus, the particular contains by implication the universal; and it is for this reason that it has upon us all the effect of the universal. An analogy will assist you in comprehending that which is metaphysical in what I have just told you.

A phenomenon takes place, a stone falls. You believe immediately that it has a cause, although you do not perceive the universal principle that every fact has a cause. And yet it is true that the particular fact has a cause only because it is true that every fact has a cause. Thus, the whole truth contained in the universal principle is implied in the particular application; and it is this truth

which makes it impossible for you to doubt, without even conceiving the universal principle, that the falling stone has a cause; you are sure of it, although you do not conceive the universal principle. Why? Because, if it is true that everything has a cause, it is true that the particular fact has a cause also. All the evidence leads us to believe that the fact has a cause. Each particular moral fact has all the force of the absolute. And in the psychological order we ascend (a thing quite remarkable) from the particular application to universal judgments by degrees which are not very numerous, but which we can ascertain and distinguish. It is the same with all the *a priori* conceptions of reason. They are always revealed in a particular application, to which they lend their force, and then what there is universal in this particular application becomes separated for certain minds, but not for others.

I do not pretend to say that all these conceptions, which form the basis of morality, which explain it, which make it clear, appear in all minds; far from it. Experience proves that it does not so appear; but that which does appear in all minds is the particular application of these conceptions; which imply in all minds something felt by every mind: a confused idea, a confused feeling of order and of the respect which every reasonable creature should have for order. The proper and true name of moral

good and moral evil, is order and disorder. When I act badly, I feel myself at war with order. The most obscure and least developed conscience has this feeling as well as the most enlightened. When I act badly morally, I feel myself in hostility to order; when I do well, I feel that I am in harmony with order—that is, in harmony with the absolute and common law of the creation. I am in the ways of God as the Scriptures say; for the ways of God are his designs; they are the laws which govern the universe and lead it to its end. These are the ways of God. Whenever I am in the way of accomplishing my destiny, or am aiding in the accomplishment of the destiny of others, I am in the ways of God; for I am contributing as much as possible to the accomplishment of his law and his designs. Order is, therefore, perceived by every moral creature; it is through this idea that every creature is moral. Without this idea he is not moral. This idea presents itself under one form or another; it is sometimes obscure, sometimes clear: but the idea exists for the whole world; it envelops the principle which I, as metaphysician and philosopher, have just unfolded. The conception of such principles does not impose a plainer duty than is imposed upon every creature by the confused perception of order. The difference between a philosopher and an ordinary man is that the philo-

sopher accounts for that which obliges, while the ordinary man does not account to himself for it; the obligation, however, remains. An ordinary man has a vague and indefinite idea of it. Question him in regard to the fundamental ideas of morality, he will not be able to answer you, or will answer you briefly. Question the philosopher: he will either answer by a false system, because he has not well separated that which exists in the confused conscience of all men: or he may answer you as I have done, by the exposition of the true moral conceptions. In one as well as the other you will find the ideas that we have a destination; that certain things are in conformity with this destination, and certain others opposed; that we are in accordance with order when we do the former, with disorder when we do the latter; that other men have also their end to accomplish; that they are responsible for it; that I ought to respect it; that it would be unworthy of me, not only to prevent them from being in accordance with order, but even not to assist them in being so when they have need of my assistance. These thoughts are common to all men.

Philosophy, as I have said many times, being occupied only with questions profoundly interesting to humanity, which every man asks himself a thousand times in the course of his life, under one form

or another, only enlightens that which is obscure in the consciousness of all, and it is only right in its systems, in its conclusions, when it is approved by the consciousness of all—that is, when the conscience of all is recognized in the clear description which it gives.

This is all that I intended to say to you in to-day's lecture. I am far from having exhausted all that I ought to explain to you in order to lay the foundation and the different parts of a system of morality which I hope to build up in time. This is, in some sort, but the peristyle of the system which I wish to establish in all its parts. I shall attempt in the next lecture to show you how, this point of departure established, we must proceed in order to arrive at a determination of what the true end of man in this life consists.

Observe that up to this point I am in the form, I have not yet approached the matter. It is true that the end of man is his good; that it is an element of absolute order; that he must accomplish it, and nothing else. But what is this end of our nature? It is absolutely indispensable to establish this end as far as a certain point in what it possesses of the most general, before entering into the determination of what it is for each particular case.

Therefore, in the next lecture, although I shall

certainly omit many points which deserve to be developed and made clear, I shall take up the matter of the moral idea; that is, I shall recall to your mind in what the end of man generally consists in this life, a point I treated of fully when I gave you a course of lectures on general morality. The object of a course of lectures on general morality is to determine the forms of morality, and in general what its matter is, or to demonstrate, in other words, that man has an end, and to ascertain in general what this end is. Remember one thing that I explained in a former course of lectures—that the end of man results from his nature, and that from his nature, placed in the singular and exceptional circumstances of the present life, results his end in this life, which is altogether different from his absolute end. As morality is for this life only, we must first determine in general what the absolute end of man is, such as results from his nature; secondly, what the special end of man in this life is, for he is prevented from reaching his absolute end by the organization of this world. Whence it follows that he is not called into this life for the realization of this end, but only for the realization of the portion of this end permitted by this life. From this thing result very important and very serious consequences for ethics and all practical morality. I shall describe briefly in the

next lecture all that which man has in himself, all that which the circumstances of this life place in him and which does not depend upon him, and the end of man, such as it results from his nature and from what is added to it by the world. If I am not successful in embracing so vast a subject in all its extent, I will continue it in the lecture following.

LECTURE VII.

THEORETICAL VIEWS CONTINUED.

I come, gentlemen, directly to the subject of my lecture. In order to search for what the end of man consists in, or the end of any being whatsoever, we must previously have conceived that every being has an end, and that therefore man has an end. There are, therefore, as I have already told you, in the determination of the idea of good or the end of man, two elements, one of which presupposes the other. The determination of what our end consists in, is one of these elements; the conception that man has an end is the other, and the first of these elements presupposes the other. One of these two elements, the determination of what our end consists in, is empirical, the other is not; the latter is an *a priori* conception of reason, a conception which no kind of experience can give. The mind proceeds from the conception that we have an end to the investigation *a posteriori* of this end. I said that the investigation *a posteriori* of our end presupposes the idea that we have an end;

for, to seek for anything, we must have the idea of it. Never, during life, would any one, moralist or not, think of seeking for the end of man without the *a priori* conception that teaches us that man has an end. Therefore, all is not empirical in the determination of our good. In fact, when we are seeking for what is our good, we are seeking, it is true, for what is the good of a particular being, and there is therefore a contingent and particular element in this inquiry; but the idea itself of good is not empirical, for it is nothing else than the idea of the end of a being. The idea of the end of a being is itself contained in the *a priori* conception that every being has an end, which is not and cannot be given by experience.

The determination of the good of a being presupposes again the idea that this being has an end. The method by which this determination takes place, and can only take place, is derived from the idea of an end, and from the idea, likewise *a priori*, of the relation existing between the end of a being and its nature. Thus the idea of an end, which is the same thing as the idea of good for our reason, is an *a priori* idea given us in the conception of an absolute truth also *a priori*—namely, that every being has an end. This idea being given, the determination of the end of a given being is possible, although this deter-

mination is *a posteriori*. We have the idea of such an inquiry; we have, moreover, the method by which such an investigation can be accomplished; and this idea—this method—without which the investigation could not be accomplished, presupposes the *a priori* conception.

Gentlemen, to this first conception, that everything has an end, which is *a priori*, are added two others: the first is, that the end of a being is the good of this being, seeing that for our reason there is an absolute equation between the idea of the end and the idea of the good of the being. This is the first of the two conceptions which are added to the conception that every being has an end; the second is that which a being ought to do to reach its end. In other words, between the idea of the end and the idea of the good of a being is the third idea—namely, what a being ought to do is to accomplish its end, to accomplish that which is good for it. These three ideas are intimately connected, and it is by the last of these three ideas that the simple conceptions of our mind exercise and can exercise an influence over our will.

Undoubtedly, if we stop at this conception that every being has an end, and that we have an end, and to this conception is not added the idea that we must proceed toward that end, that it is exactly in this that the rule of our conduct ought to con-

sist, the first conception would have no influence whatever upon our will, not any more than the axiom *two and two make four*. The conception that everything has an end expresses merely a universal fact; but there follows nothing for the will, nothing for practice. What renders this truth practical is the fact that to the idea that every being has an end is immediately added the idea that this end is precisely what the whole conduct of this being should tend toward; in other words, that the investigation and pursuit of this end is the law itself of the being. From that moment and by this second conception, this truth, which was purely speculative, and which had no influence on our conduct, becomes a practical truth. The idea of obligation is the idea of something acting upon our will. This is so evident that we would fall into a war about words merely if we should attempt to develop and explain this truth. It is so simple that it cannot bear explanation. Whoever speaks of obligation means something which acts upon the reason and the will.

Such are the two elements of the idea which an intelligent being has of what is good for him, or of what he ought to do; first, he conceives that he has an end, then the idea of finding out what this end is, then the method for determining it; afterward comes the determination itself of the end by the given method which perfects and completes

the idea of good, or the idea of what he ought to do.

Such is the complete conception of the idea of good for an intelligent being, and therefore for man. Let us apply all this to man. He has an end. By virtue of the absolute principle that every being has an end, he knows that this end is conformable to his nature—that is to say, that he has a particular end which is not the end of any other being, because he has a particular nature, which is not the nature of any other being. From this comes the particular method to determine what his end is. He must examine what his nature is and what end belongs to this nature. The method is very simple; but a long time before the idea of end appears in our mind, a long time before the idea that we have an end, and that it is relative to our nature, shows itself, we proceed toward our end; we proceed toward it from the first day of our existence. And indeed, before our reason is awakened, and before it comprehends the world and man living in the world, our nature fulfills its functions—that is, it aspires to, and by aspiring impels us toward its true end. It impels us toward it by the instincts—that is, by the thousand desires which are but the expression of our nature. We advance, then, toward our end before we have any idea that we have an end. We advance toward it

by virtue of the instincts; this is the instinctive mode of determination.

When from the point of view of selfishness we have marked out, as the aim of our conduct, the greatest satisfaction of our instincts—of our desires, or what comes to the same thing, of our nature—and we have acted in conformity with this rule, we are still advancing toward our end; for to reach the greatest satisfaction of our nature is to reach our end, since it is to reach that for which our nature was made. What difference is there, then, between the moral activity, or the moral conduct, and the conduct determined by instinct or directed by selfishness? There is this great difference, that in the last two cases—that is, in the conduct directed by instinct or selfishness—we have no conception of our true law, and we do not act in the name of this true law. In other words, we do a certain thing—what we wish to do—without knowing the reason for which we wish to do it, without conceiving that we ought to do it; we do by desire that which we are called to do by intelligence, by reason, by duty.

And why, gentlemen, in the instinctive determinations, and in the selfish determinations, do we not act in obedience to our true law, in virtue of a duty, in a way perfectly intelligible? Because, when our reason seeks to account for the motive

through which it acts, when it obeys the instinct or love of self, it finds no evidence in the two propositions expressing these two modes of determination —namely, that we ought to do what our instinct impels us to, that we ought to seek the greatest possible satisfaction of our nature. There is no evidence in these two propositions, not any more than there is in those other two, which are perfectly identical; that toward which the instinct impels us is good, that toward which love of self impels is good. If there was any evidence in these last two propositions, the propositions "that toward which instinct and selfishness impel is what we ought to do" would be clear; but as there is no evidence in the former, so there is none in the latter. We cannot find the true law in the instincts or in selfishness; for we find no end fulfilling the idea of good in our minds, and we therefore find no law—that is, what we ought to do. The reason is, that although instinct drives us toward our true end, although selfishness directs us toward it, we have not found our true law, and we are not moral beings so long as we obey merely instinct or allow ourselves to be directed by selfishness. We reach the moral state on that day only when we comprehend that we have an end, and that this end is only an element of good; as from that time we are under the sway of a clear proposition, which com-

pletes for us by a true equation the idea of good and the idea of what we ought to do; and moreover, this evident proposition, which completely satisfies our reason, imposes upon us a new obligation for all occasions—the obligation of acting in a certain manner to reach a certain good; we are, in a word, under the authority of a law, and of a law which is our true law, while before nothing of the kind existed. But from this point of view, from the point of view that we are explaining, we discover that under the impulse of instinct, as well as under the direction of selfishness, we are already on the road to the accomplishment of our end; for we cannot have the idea, as I have repeated constantly, that we have an end, without having the idea that it is conformable to our nature; and just as instinct is nothing else than the voice of nature, selfishness is nothing more than the sum of the instincts. It is clear that God has arranged all things so that before reason appears in us we advance, by the instinctive force alone and by the effort of the empirical reason, toward the fulfillment of our destiny. Thus are reconciled for us the instinctive, the selfish and the moral modes; thus all is justified, all explained; but while showing that when obeying the instincts we are in the road of our destiny, that when obeying selfishness we are still in it, the conception of our having an end shows

us all the difference existing between those modes of determination and the other, which consist in obedience to the moral motive—to the motive that is intelligent. I have already described to you the contest of our instincts, and all the imperfections in our conduct resulting from it. I have also shown you that selfishness has not a sufficient comprehension of our vocation, and this is the reason that it is subject to a thousand errors. Therefore, in practice, our conduct, directed either by instinct or selfishness, is full of mistakes. But there is a more essential difference still: it is the difference of the motive.

When we obey our instincts we obey ourselves. When we obey selfishness, we still obey ourselves, and not a law; while, in yielding obedience to a law by virtue of which we must advance toward our end and harmonize with the universal end, we obey something which is not ourselves; our action proceeds from something superior to ourselves. In a word, our being is elevated by acting in the name of the moral motive, while it is not elevated, it remains in itself, when acting in the name of the instincts. In the name of selfishness and the instincts we assist others; for, sympathy impels us to inflict no pain, to do good to others. Self-interest well understood makes us understand that if we do evil to others, they will do evil to us in turn.

We can, therefore, still respect in this way the end of others and even assist them in accomplishing it, but it is always through the personal motive. It is not by virtue of an evident truth that we do this; our conduct, then, is not moral. But from the day on which our end and the end of others appear to us as the evident elements of absolute good, that is, of the impenetrable designs of God, which, impenetrable as they are, are clearly wise and good, from that moment we have as much reason to wish the good of others, to respect it, to aid it, as we have to wish our own. Consequently this good becomes as sacred in our eyes as our own, and as sacred as the absolute good which we cannot comprehend. From that moment we are just, benevolent, charitable by virtue of a law—by virtue of an impersonal motive. Such is the difference existing between these three modes of conduct, proceeding from three inspirations which agree, but which are not identical. You shall see the step which we take when we leave selfishness behind to enter into the moral mode. You see that we enter by means of the reason, which solves, by a clear equation the problem; "What is good?" And as soon as this solution is found by the reason, the idea of our good is established; the idea of its being obligatory is established; and a method is given to determine where the good is which can be applied to

the whole creation. Furnished with this fundamental and supreme idea, that the end of all things is absolute good, that the end of each thing is the good of each thing, and that the particular ends of all beings are the elements of the absolute end, and consequently fragments of the absolute good, furnished with this supreme idea and the method which follows to determine the end of the whole or of particular beings, we end by means of the application in this result: that it is necessary in order to determine the end of a being, that the nature of this being should be studied and known. Now, in this vast universe, not only the nature of a multitude of beings perceptible to our senses cannot be known by us profoundly and thoroughly, but moreover the immensity of this world escapes us, and we see but a very small point of it; and, therefore, although we are sure that the whole has an end, and that in this whole each thing has an end, as we can determine the end only of a very small number of beings, we are bound to respect only this small number of beings; for we cannot respect those we do not know. Therefore in the portion known to us of the end of each thing, we are connected with the universal end—with universal order, which is only the accomplishment of this end. But we cannot be connected with it otherwise than by particulars, we cannot be connected

with it in the whole. Therefore, the cause of our duties being so limited in this life and hardly extending beyond ourselves and our fellow beings, is the fact that we do not know clearly, plainly, the end of other beings surrounding us. As soon as we pass to animals, to plants, to minerals, to all creatures which with us fill up this world—itself a scarcely perceptible fragment of the universe—obscurity comes upon us. Who can tell us why plants, why animals were created? Here the difficulty commences, here duty becomes obscure. For us, our end has already been pointed out by the nature of our desires, of our propensities; the end of other men, of our fellow creatures, is the same as ours; this portion of order is, therefore, sacred for us, because we know it. Beyond this portion of order that we know, the light vanishes; nothing more that is certain appears to us; from this point duty ceases, or at least becomes feebler. But when we leave the limits of this world and ask ourselves what is the end of the earth? what is the end of the beings inhabiting this globe? what is the end of the whole? then all light disappears; and the method which determines the end can no longer be applied; but there remains one truth, it is that everything has an end, that this end is God, since God has imposed it; that the law of the universe, which we do not know, is the progress followed

according to the laws willed by God. Then, we are united by thought and by the heart to this universal order; we can respect it only from afar; we can neither aid nor oppose it. It remains only more sacred for us to realize the portion of order which we ought to accomplish, and which the beings around us, who resemble us, are charged to accomplish. Here is the limit, here duty ceases. You perceive that the form of the moral idea embraces all, but you perceive at the same time that the matter, if I can say so, is wholly limited.

Let us apply, then, gentlemen, to the human individual the method to determine his end and let us see what this method gives us. In determining my end, I determine the end of all beings resembling myself.

Gentlemen, I devoted the lectures of a year to the determination of man's end, and in this lecture I can only recapitulate in a very rapid way what I have already said. When I shall come to the different parts of the rule of human conduct, you will see that I descend from these generalities in order to establish in each of the principal situations in which man can be placed what his end is, and how he must act in order to reach it. For these two reasons: first, because I have devoted a whole year to solve the general problem of man's end;

secondly, because the entire continuation of this course is to be the development of this inquiry; and finally, because I have only this one lecture to give you, I am obliged to limit myself to the broadest generalities. You will, however, have a general view of the whole, and this is what I ought to give you in an introduction to ethics.

Gentlemen, the idea we have of man according to our observations shows us that there exists in him instincts, tendencies, desires, through which his nature is expressed and is revealed primitively, and as long as he lives in this world; that, moreover, there exist in him faculties—that is, instruments which answer to his desires and to the tendencies expressed by his nature, and each of which has clearly for its aim the satisfaction of some of these tendencies; that he possesses a faculty of comprehension, the object of which is to enlighten him on the nature of things which his being calls for through his desires, and the best employment of his faculties for the satisfaction of these same desires; lastly, there is in him a directive force, called will or self-control, which has for its object, under the superior authority of intelligence and of reason, or the faculty of comprehension, to direct these different instruments placed in him, in the best way for reaching the satisfaction of his nature.

This is what philosophy teaches in regard to the faculties of human nature. This is the most complete division of the faculties.

For example, to cite particular cases, we have an ardent desire for knowledge; it is one of the most persevering tendencies of our nature, it is also one of those tendencies which manifest themselves from the very moment of our existence in this world. We have a faculty corresponding to this tendency, charged with its satisfaction, which is called the intellect. The intellect itself contains a faculty of comprehension, which causes us to see our desire of knowledge; which sees that consequently it is in conformity with our end, that we should satisfy it, and that we have a faculty made for it; which teaches us in what way we must direct this faculty to attain the greatest possible satisfaction of the tendency. Finally, with the aid of the will, we carry into effect, while governing our intellectual faculty, that which is prescribed by the reason, or the comprehending faculty.

Let us notice also the harmony of all the parts in another example. We have a tendency not less strong, not less permanent, primitive, essential to our nature; it is sympathy, which in its most general acceptation and tendency impels us to a union, a harmony, an association with all that which, far or near, is active like ourselves—that is, all that is

a cause or energy. It unites us, or impels us to unite ourselves, especially with all those beings who, like us, are intelligent and free causes; it unites us less strongly with beings that are less intelligent and active, like the animals; less and less strongly with the plants, because they also have life and a development; finally, with everything which in the creation has something of our nature—that is, which is a cause, a cause in all possible degrees. Sympathy has all this breadth; it impels us to a union with all that lives, commencing with God and ending with the lowest created being possessing a spark of life. Sympathy is satisfied but very imperfectly in this life; of all our tendencies it is the least satisfied. A number of our faculties answer to this tendency and have for their special object its satisfaction. To cite only one, I will take the faculty of expression, the faculty which puts us in communication with other men, which permits us to make them participate in all our wishes and in all our thoughts. Governed in a certain way by our will, with the light of our intellect which sees why it was created and what it is charged with accomplishing in this world, this faculty succeeds in gaining in this life a pretty complete satisfaction of the sympathetic tendency.

You perceive the agreement between the tendency on the one hand, the faculty on the other,

and then the directing or executive power, made up of the will and the intellect. This is what we constantly find in ourselves. This phenomenon, which I have just shown you in two cases, is repeated relatively in all our tendencies, so that we can discover the absolute end of man, resulting from his nature, if we make a psychological examination of all the tendencies of our constitution. Psychology, which is the foundation, the point of departure, the condition of all the philosophical sciences whatsoever, although not the only one, is not very far advanced; and the proof is that we will search in vain in the annals of philosophy, commencing with Thales and ending with Condillac, for a vigorous, serious and profound study of the primitive tendencies, or what I have called in the course of these lectures, the primitive instincts of human nature; and yet it is here that we discover the secret of men's conduct, for it is through them that man's nature expresses itself, that it reveals its organization and why it was created. I know that this is not the whole end of humanity; that it is not less the end from the fact that these tendencies are satisfied in a certain way than that they are satisfied at all. I believe, and it is clear to me, that the rational, free, voluntary, intelligent, active mode, by which these tendencies must attain their satisfaction, is not less essential to the end of man

than the satisfaction itself. But, finally, the solution of the question, which has for its aim the end of man, is, in reality, in the determination of these tendencies, in what they are distinct from each other, and as to the different objects toward which they impel us. If, for instance, you perceive in the nature of man, out of ten tendencies (supposing that number) only five, the half of man escapes you. Suppose you do not perceive in the nature of man the tendency about which I have just spoken to you—sympathy—you will perhaps place the whole end of man in knowledge, you will believe that love does not exist at all. Suppose in your analysis you fail to find activity, or the desire of doing, or the love of power, or ambition, this tendency suppressed, an essential part of man is suppressed at the same time. Again, if you suppress curiosity or the desire which impels us to knowledge, you will not perceive that absolute science is embraced in the true end of man. Therefore, according as we make a more or less exact, a more or less truthful analysis of the primitive tendencies of human nature, we come to a more or less exact, a more or less truthful determination of the true end of man, such as results from his nature.

In telling you this, I wish merely to show you how we must proceed in order to discover the end

of man; for in fact, although philosophers have not ascertained the end of humanity, this has not hindered humanity from advancing towards its end. It is impossible for humanity not to be perpetually and continually in the true road of its end, and of its complete end; this does not depend in the least upon philosophy, or upon the accuracy of its results; if humanity had to wait for the results of philosophy, before advancing toward its end, humanity would have ceased to exist long since. Whatever may be the results of philosophy, human nature, acting in each man, impels each man (and consequently the whole of humanity) toward his end. To determine what this end is, is not the less a question of the highest importance; for it is the knowledge of a thing which takes place entirely alone, instinctively; it is to place clearly in the moral law that which each one feels rather by inspiration than any other way. And you see that, in this case as in all others, philosophy goes no further than to make *clear* what all the world knows. This is the way that science should proceed in order to arrive at a determination of man's end.

Now, I come to another point which is of great importance: it is, that the end of man, such as results from his nature—such as his nature implies—is not completely accomplished in this life, and

even is incapable of being completely accomplished in this life.

Gentlemen, take any tendency of your nature, and see if this tendency is in any human individual, or in the whole human species, completely satisfied. It is evident that it is completely satisfied neither in the individual nor in the species. It is evident, besides, that so long as the world is constituted as it is, and it cannot be constituted otherwise than as it is, it is impossible for any of the tendencies of our nature to be completely satisfied either in the individual or species. Do you know what is the satisfaction of a tendency of our nature? For the intellect, it is absolute knowledge: for sympathy, it is the absolute union and perfect harmony of beings among themselves. Now it is very clear, to stop at these two examples, that absolute knowledge and harmony, and a perfect union of beings among themselves, cannot be absolutely realized in the organization of this world, such as it is. Let it not be said that this depends on the organization of society, and that by organizing society differently we could reach a perfect and complete satisfaction of the tendencies of our nature, as a modern sect lays claim. There is no organization of society which can attain to absolute knowledge; there is no organization of society which can attain to a complete union of beings among themselves in this world.

Undoubtedly, by more or less skillful organizations of society we can increase the sum of the satisfaction of the different tendencies of our nature, and perhaps of all. It is in this that the progress of the social science consists. Thus at the present time the sympathy of each individual is infinitely better satisfied than it was during the barbarous ages or pastoral times, or when people were hunters, or in the different situations at which we have seen the human species successively arrive in the career of civilization. Undoubtedly, curiosity and sympathy are infinitely better satisfied in the present order of things than in the past; but compare the realization with the complete satisfaction of our tendencies, and you will readily understand that there is no social organization which can remedy the inevitable evil attached to the condition of this world.

We can, then, advance by civilization toward the end for which our nature was created, but we cannot attain it in a world organized as this is.

All the labor of humanity tends toward this end, and toward these different elements; but humanity tends toward it with a perpetual resistance on the part of things. It advances, but the end is impossible to be attained; the end is beyond the reach of the efforts of humanity. At the present time we can without doubt congratulate our-

selves at having arrived, in the career of the end of humanity, at a certain point where life is quite comfortable ; but life is pleasant relatively, and when we have come to the limits of human knowledge such as it exists, the problems the most interesting to us remain still unsolved, and not only those which we conceive, but those we do not conceive ; for we know that in the career of human knowledge a multitude of problems spring up and branch out into others ; the career extends in proportion to the development of knowledge. To meet with obstacles is therefore the characteristic of the human condition ; the obstacles encountered by all our faculties, all working for the satisfaction of our tendencies, the obstacles are here, they are in the condition of this world. This world organized as it is, is the meeting in opposition of the different destinies, of the different developments. Every being limits the other, and is limited by all the others ; we limit each other mutually, and the whole art of civilization for the human species only consists in putting in harmony, in rendering parallel forces which were not so naturally. Every new discovery in social science tends to make parallel, forces which were in opposition, and all the discoveries of the natural or physical sciences only tend to place in harmony with our force the blind forces which were before opposed to it. Thus, whenever

we discover the law of a natural force—of steam, of air—what happens? Knowing the law of this blind force, we direct the force in the way of our designs; although formerly opposed to us, it becomes now our assistant, it becomes an instrument in our hands. Civilization tends to place in harmony all the forces animating it, particularly the human forces; for, before civilization, these forces were more or less opposed. But between complete harmony and the degree of harmony which human power can in time establish between the forces animating the world, there will always remain an immeasurable interval.

From this it follows that the absolute end of man such as results from his nature, is not to be realized in this world; consequently, that man and the species have not been placed in this world in order to attain the realization of this end; for if they had been placed here for that purpose, the world would have been so constituted that this could have been possible. Now this is not so; therefore it is not for this purpose that they have been placed here. It is therefore evident that the end of the present life is not this absolute end, that it is distinct from it. It remains for us to find out what the end of the present life is.

Gentlemen, when we look at it closely, we find that this very circumstance of the present condi-

tion putting obstacles in the way of the satisfaction of all our tendencies, and the development of all our faculties, produces and creates in us certain things which are of the highest importance for us and for the accomplishment of our destiny. When we look at the thing still more closely, we find that the obstacles are so important that it is indispensable that they should exist. When we have come to this point, the present life, with all its miseries, is completely explained: it is proved to be necessary for man's destiny. What is created in us by an obstacle, or the present condition? There is created in the first place the direction of our faculties by the will and the reason; for, if we suppose that at the beginning, in the infant, all the instincts of his nature impelling him to endeavor to satisfy his faculties, he had met with no difficulty, no obstacle to this kind of satisfaction, it is clear that the will or self control would never have been awakened in him. It is clear, morever, that if the reason had been awakened in him, it would have existed merely for the purpose of contemplating the being advancing toward its end naturally, and without hindrance, and without interfering in any way. Reason would be in us what it is in regard to external things—a simple spectator; and as to the will and liberty, they would never be awakened because they would not be necessary. What

makes the intervention of the will necessary—that is, the control acquired by man over himself, and the constant and continual direction of his faculties, is the fact that the faculties not directed come to be directed against the obstacle, and know not how to turn it aside. The intelligent direction of liberty is needed to turn the obstacle aside, or to overthrow it when it can be overthrown. Liberty, or the control we have over ourselves, concentrates upon the point which resists, the whole strength of our faculties, thus acquiring a fivefold or tenfold power. Besides, the intellect has recourse to a method—to an art—to certain means to assist the strength of the faculties or supply its wants, when this strength is not sufficiently great to turn aside the obstacle, or when the obstacle cannot be overthrown.

Thus in the road of the accomplishment of our destiny, the obstacle met by our tendencies and liberty awakes in us liberty and creates personality—that is, the being who knows that he controls himself, who makes use of what he possesses in himself to advance toward his end, comprehends this end and sees it.

This is what is created by the obstacle. Now, this obstacle is the condition of humanity. If it did not exist there would be for us neither liberty, (for it would not be awakened in us) nor even virtue or vice, good or evil; man would not be a

moral being. In what does the moral good consist? In the free and intelligent accomplishment, through the will, of the law; that is, of our order: that is, again, of our end in each particular circumstance. Without this, we would be given up to the impetuosity of our momentary passions. But the intellect exists in man, which plans what ought to be done; the will exists, which will carry the plan into execution. When the will does so it is praiseworthy; when it does not do so it is blameworthy. It is this which makes man moral, worthy. Personality on the one hand, morality on the other, result from the present condition. If we suppose a condition containing no obstacles to our end, all this would be impossible; we would proceed toward our end in a passive manner, if we can say so, speaking of something active. It would be like the spring of a watch, once wound up by the hand of the workman, gradually unwinding itself and marking the hours until night; but this spring would never participate in the effect produced. We would remain things, we would not become persons. Such is the difference between things and persons. How comes it that we rise from the low condition of a being who is only a thing, to the sublime condition of a person? How comes it that there exists moral good which we are to attain? It comes from the fact that the world is made as it is;

from the fact that we do not make a single step towards our end except by the sweat of our brow.

Another thing comes into my hypothesis: it is this—that the very happiness resulting from the satisfaction of our nature (for it is in the agreeable sensation which itself results from this satisfaction) would exist perfect for each individual, but for this very reason would not be felt. And in fact we only perceive our happiness or the agreeable sensation by the contrast with our disagreeable sensations. A being who meets with a complete and continual satisfaction of all the desires of his nature as his natural state, and whose mortal life flows on in this satisfaction, this being would not assuredly feel evil; but he would be insensible to his good. What causes us to feel our happiness, is the present life—a life whose condition is misery.

Moreover, for our reason, happiness which has not been deserved is without worth, is nothing. There is a conception in our reason which tells us that merit is the condition of happiness, its natural and true condition, that happiness before merit is an unmeaning term: that happiness is in our end, since it is the necessary effect of the accomplishment of our end, but that it is as the recompense of the effort that we make to attain and conquer our end. In other words, our reason subordinates, as effect and consequence, happiness and virtue,

happiness and effort. Now, in the hypothesis, which is contrary to actual life, if happiness should come before merit, there would never be any possibility either of virtue or morality arising. To realize these, man must become like God. Now, what does God do? He creates by his will and intelligence: he is the high and perfect person. For a human individual to become a personal creature and cease being a thing, to become like God, and unite freely and voluntarily in the plan of the creation within the narrow limits of his power, to become virtuous, to arrive at moral dignity, to feel happiness, to be worthy of it, there is needed not a condition in which the accomplishment of the end may be possible, but where it may be impossible—that is, a condition full of obstacles.

The present life is not, then, an accident; the present life is necessary; it is not only explained, it is completely justified. There is not a person who would wish, who would even dare in his thoughts, to prefer the happy condition which I described a short time ago to the condition given us by this life. Yes, every man who has the feeling of the dignity of being a person, of the dignity of being able to be virtuous, of being able to unite with God in the plan of the creation, of the dignity of being able to comprehend it, of being able to feel universal order, to catch a glimpse of it, to

realize it in himself—no man who has this in his mind (and every man has it to a certain degree) can hesitate to prefer the actual good such as it is with the physical and moral evil mingled with it, to the condition which would have attended us in an order of things in which we would have experienced a complete satisfaction of our tendencies.

The present life is, therefore, preëminently good, because it is preëminently bad. Its excellence is in the evil it contains; for the price of this evil is morality, is personality. If this is so, two consequences follow: the first, that the end of this life is not so much in the advance we may make toward our absolute end—that is to say, toward knowledge, toward power, toward a union with beings like ourselves, or different from us; that the end is not so much this, as it is the production of moral good—the energetic, all-powerful creation of personality in us. To render ourselves free, that is to say, masters of ourselves, to make use of this liberty in the way of our true end, not to act through passion or through calculation, but in the name of order, this is the true end of this life; and it is the true end of this life because it depends upon ourselves to attain it, while the other end does not depend upon us. It is this which in our minds justifies the Creator in the inequality with which he seems to

have distributed the different beings which have succeeded each other in time. I have been born in an advanced and civilized society, in which the sum of happiness is great, the amount of evil considerably diminished—or, thanks to enlightenment, to education, to tradition, I see more clearly my duty and can accomplish it more easily. There is no equality between my position and that of the savage in the forests of North America, the Huns and the Vandals who invaded the Roman empire. There is no equality between the present condition and the condition of the people who wandered in their forests ten centuries before the Christian era. Yes, there appears to exist a great inequality; it would be immense if the end of this life was the attainment of the true end of man. But the true end of life is the creation in oneself of the human, the moral person. Now this creation may be as complete in the savage as in civilized man. And indeed, gentlemen, merit is not proportioned to the light. I may either just catch a glimpse of my true end, or see but few elements of it, or take a more comprehensive view of it. This is the difference between the savage, the barbarian and myself. If with my conscience, in the first case, I am as faithful to one or two of the first points of order as to the thousand which I now perceive, I am just as virtuous; if I make as many efforts to reach a

perfect end as I do in a better state to reach to a more perfect end, I am just as virtuous, I have accomplished the true end of this life. The true end of this life does not depend upon any external cause, it depends entirely upon the individual. We all carry in ourselves the realization of our true destiny here below, provided we bring to it all our intelligence for its comprehension, all our courage to proceed.

This is, then, the true end of the present life, which can only be accomplished in proportion as we proceed toward the absolute end.

A second consequence is even more evident, or as evident as the first, and certainly as important. We have just ascertained the condition of the present life, and what condition? The condition that in this life shall be realized the qualities of our nature, which will render us worthy of our true end—of our absolute end. All, then, that we have just said would be absurd if there was not another or several other lives. My nature is of a certain mold; in virtue of its organization, it possesses desires which have an end or an object. An intellect exists in me which comprehends the entire capacity of these desires—a sensibility which is exceedingly unhappy, for these desires die powerless and cannot be satisfied on this earth. I possess, besides, certain faculties, all of which, in

spite of obstacles, have the necessary power to satisfy these tendencies. All this I would comprehend in myself; I would be unhappy in the present condition; I would explain to myself this condition; I would see its necessity, its conveniences in a certain hypothesis which my whole nature demands, and would this hypothesis be merely an impossible —an absurd chimera? On the contrary, the greatest absurdity imaginable would be that the present life was the whole; I do not know of any greater absurdity in any branch of science. The greatest absurdity and the greatest contradiction imaginable would be, that the present life was the whole—therefore there will be another.

Will this life be one or many? Will it be a succession of lives in which the obstacles will continually diminish, or shall we rather be cast, in leaving this life, into a life without obstacles? We may choose between these two hypotheses. What we can assert under penalty of condemning the universe, the world, the present life, man, God, everything for absurdity, is that the present life is not the whole, and that the end of another life will be the accomplishment of our true end, and no longer the creation of the moral personality, unless we suppose a succession of lives in which this personality may be increased until the personal creation will be perfected, and until there shall be given a

life in which the true end of man is possible—is complete.

Such, gentlemen, is my opinion of the foundation and the tendency of morality. I have exhibited it to you in the metaphysical part with all the obscurity and inconveniences which this part always draws with it; you can, however, through all the imperfection of my explanation, perceive the outline, but I have not yet paid any attention to the details; when I come to these details, they will merely make clear that which I have left obscure.

LECTURE VIII.

THEORETICAL VIEWS CONTINUED.

You have noticed, gentlemen, that in all that I have said in regard to my doctrine relative to the groundwork of morality, I have been employed particularly in determining the idea of good. This is, in fact, the fundamental point. Around this idea and the conceptions which produce it in man's mind, there are besides other facts which are equally moral facts, because they accompany the notion of good; and not only because they accompany it, but because they perfect it. I have somewhat neglected all these necessary facts, and I neglected them because I remembered that I had already given you a course of lectures on general morality, and that in that course of lectures I had explained at length not only the moral conception properly so called, but also all the conceptions and all the facts obviously belonging to it. I remembered that my object in a course of lectures on ethics ought to be only to go rapidly over the foundations of morality, resting chiefly on the

notion of good, because it is from this notion of good in itself that must proceed for each of the situations in which man can be placed the rules of conduct to which he must hold in each of these situations. Nevertheless, before proceeding to the different branches of ethics, it is well to recall for this audience the facts accompanying the moral fact properly so called, which complete it, which add to the notion of good other very important notions. This is what I shall do in this lecture, which will be the last of the introductory lectures, in pointing out to you the facts enveloping the moral fact properly so called. I shall besides run over the logical order of the different moral conceptions, so that you will find in this lecture, or at least I shall try to place before you, not only the accessory points which I did not touch upon in the former lectures, but also a kind of review of my opinions on the principles of morality.

Gentlemen, two kinds of facts follow the conception of absolute good; rational facts like the conception itself, and sensible facts. The idea of good cannot enter into our minds without other ideas being produced in us immediately and in its train—ideas which the first gives birth to, because between the idea of good and these other ideas there is a necessary connection. The first of these ideas, inevitably awakened in us by the conception

of good, is the idea of obligation. We cannot separate these two ideas of good and of obligation. As soon as we have placed under the word *good* the true idea represented by the word, immediately that which we have just placed under the word *good* appears obligatory; and a long time before we have formed to ourselves a clear idea of what is represented by the word *good*, the confused idea we have of it appears to us as if implying obligation. There is not, gentlemen, a closer connection between the idea of what is good and the idea of what ought to be done, than there is between the idea of figure and the thing figured—that is to say, between the ideas implying it the most intimately. So that, for instance, to ask why good ought to be done, is precisely like asking why that which ought to be done ought to be done. For between what is good and what ought to be done, there is such a necessary relation that the one of these ideas is the other; as far as one can make use of the character of obligation to determine what is good, so far did Kant. This proposition that what is good ought to be done is self-evident, just as much as the proposition that every effect has a cause; there is between both a perfect similarity both of authority and necessity, and both are derived from the same source, which is intuitive reason.

Gentlemen, no idea of good, other than that of an

end, draws in its train the idea of obligation, proving that the other ideas of good are not the idea of what is truly good in itself. Thus we call knowledge, power, and many other things toward which our propensities draw us, good. Try to conceive one of these things as obligatory, such as ought to be pursued, your reason will refuse to do it. Why? Because the thing is not good in itself. It is only on that day when the idea of true good being conceived, we perceive that the good to which our propensities impel us is part of the true good, that obligation attaches to the pursuit of this particular good; but this obligation is attached to the idea of the true good—to good in itself; and it is only because certain things have been shown to be emanations of good in itself, that it is obligatory to do them. Some day, for instance, it becomes obligatory upon us to develop our intellect, consequently to pursue the good, which is the knowledge of the truth. But so long as we are impelled toward this good only by the propensity existing in us, and so long as we do not conceive this propensity as the development of our end, obligation does not appear to us. Obligation is not attached to the pursuit of good which is called personal, for the idea of personal good is not the idea of true good; and it is only on that day when the idea of personal good has been proved to be one of the

elements of the idea of absolute good that personal good appears to us as obligatory.

The conception that good in itself is obligatory is not the only one produced in us by the idea of good; the practice, no longer the simple conception of good, but the practice, or the realization of good by an agent, draws with it another idea. The idea is this: whoever does good, merits—that is, is worthy of happiness; and whoever does evil, merits —that is, is worthy of unhappiness and misery. These two words, happiness and misery, in this case have been expressed by the words recompense and punishment. This translation is not unfaithful, for it is implied in the idea of merit and demerit. It is impossible for us to be the spectators of the goodness of a free and intelligent agent without conceiving that from the very fact of this agent's doing good, this agent is more worthy of happiness than an agent who does not do good, that he is more worthy for a much stronger reason than an agent who does evil; for in seeing an agent who does evil knowingly, we would consider it just that he should be punished for acting immorally—in a word, he appears to us as deserving of punishment.

Why does he who does good appear to us as deserving praise? We cannot account for the immediate and absolute principles conceived by reason. We cannot explain why a fact which

commences to exist has a cause; our mind must conceive it as an absolute truth, allowing no exception. Our mind also has to conceive that an agent who does good deserves praise. This establishes a necessary connection, and which has a great consequence in religion, between the practice of good or virtue and happiness. So that we can conclude, as Kant has done, from this alone, that happiness does not always follow virtue in this world, that this life is not definitive, that there must be another under penalty of absurdity—that is, under penalty of violating the absolute laws of truth, such as it is conceived by reason.

Gentlemen, this idea that an agent who does good deserves praise only comes to us when we think of true good—that is, of what is good in itself; for neither the good to which our propensities impel us, nor personal good such as we see practised and realized by our fellow beings, or which we ourselves practise and realize, suggests this judgment to us; and if we try to conceive this relation in regard to one of those goods, our reason refuses to do it. Therefore, from the fact that a man animated by a strong passion pursues the object of this passion, it does not follow in the least that he deserves praise for that; on the contrary, we consider that he is doing a very simple thing, that it is natural for him to do it; that if he resisted

this passion in order not to debase himself or not to harm his fellow beings, then we would consider him as deserving praise. When he merely yields to an instinct, although the aim of the instinct may be good, we cannot recognize any merit in the man. Man, in his personal aim, when he calculates the best good of the world, does not seem to us to deserve praise for that; we regard him as paying himself with his own hands, for he is seeking his greatest pleasure; it would be ridiculous to say that he deserves happiness because he pursues his pleasure. True good is the only one which appears to us as obligatory, and the only one also the practice of which seems to us as rendering him who conforms to it deserving of praise. There is a third principle, or a third circumstance, which is likewise connected with the idea of good, or rather with the idea of the practice of good—it is the idea of moral beauty. This idea has not been considered, as generally as the two former, as one of the ideas which follow the conception of good or the spectacle of the practice of good. When at the sight of a good action we experience a certain pleasure, it is not an effect without a cause, a fact without an explanation; it is not, in other words, an arbitrary event that is produced. When I taste a fruit, and it produces in me a certain sensation, and I wish to know why it produces this sensation rather than

another, I cannot find a reason for it, I see nothing necessary in it, and I say: it is because I have been constituted arbitrarily in a certain way, and that the organization, also arbitrary, of this fruit produces in me a certain sensation and not another. There is no necessary and legitimate relation for my reason between the cause produced by this effect and this effect itself, at least I cannot conceive it. Is it the same when, at the sight of a good action, I experience pleasure, I experience an agreeable emotion, and at the sight of a bad action, a disagreeable and painful emotion? It is not so, for it appears to me that it belongs to the nature of the practice of good, or of good itself, to please, that is to say, to be agreeable to whoever has a reason and an intellect to comprehend good; in other words, this necessary connection, which appears to me to exist between the idea of good and the idea of pleasure produced by good, is not an effect which appears to me arbitrary. If the contrary existed, if there was a reasonable creature on whom good, the spectacle of virtue, could cause a painful impression, I would regard it as a complete overturning of the laws of nature, I would consider it absurd, incomprehensible, inconceivable, so little arbitrary does it appear to me that the spectacle of virtue should please! I find, in other words, an immediate relation between the cause which pro-

duces this effect and this effect itself. Undoubtedly this conception has neither the evidence nor the importance in human life of the two conceptions about which I spoke to you formerly. That good appears to us obligatory, that he who does it appears to us as deserving praise, these are ideas of the highest importance which have a boundless consequence on the destiny of man. If there is the least obscurity, the least uncertainty about it, the world would stop and change. But it is a matter of no importance whether or not people agree that it is in the nature of virtue to please every reasonable and sensible being. The fact is, whenever a virtuous act is seen by us, it pleases us; whenever vice is shown us, it displeases us. It is, then, only in seeking the cause of these two effects that we discover there is nothing arbitrary in it, and that we conceive the relation existing between virtue as a spectacle and pleasure as an esthetic emotion produced by this spectacle.

This conception is not less characteristic than the former of the idea of true good and of true virtue; for, if we judge that virtue is beautiful by itself, necessarily, inevitably, we do not judge that selfishness is beautiful truly, inevitably. No more do we judge that it is a necessary property of the passion to be beautiful; this does not prevent the passion, or selfishness, from being able to please us, but in

another way. That which pleases us in passion, that which causes, for instance, the passions violently agitating the actors on the stage to move all human hearts throughout the theatre, is sympathy and not a judgment of the reason. But when we see on the stage a virtuous man, who makes sacrifices for his duty, not only before reasoning do we experience an agreeable emotion, but even in reasoning we regard it as natural, legitimate, necessary that such a sight should produce in us such an effect, while we cannot explain reasonably how and why it is necessary that the spectacle of dying Zaire should move us and give us pleasure. Indeed, it is the simple constitution of our nature which does it; it is because we were created sympathetic. If we had not been created sympathetic, this sight would not have affected us. But from the fact alone that we have been created intelligent and reasonable, the spectacle of virtue pleases our intellect, and causes the quiet, intellectual pleasure which is the peculiarity of the pleasure produced by the sight of virtue.

Such are the three great conceptions which follow, which accompany necessarily (the first two with perfect clearness, the last with considerable obscurity) the conception of good, or the conception of virtue. Now, other facts are produced in

us in the train of the idea of good and virtue. These facts are purely sensible.

The first is that of which I have already spoken to you; it is the pleasure of emotion produced in us by the spectacle of virtue or moral good; the contrary spectacle, the spectacle of vice or of moral evil, causes a disagreeable impression. When we ourselves do good or evil, there is no longer a spectacle before us, but the practice itself; the accomplishment by us of good or evil produces in our souls stronger emotions, although of the same nature, which are also agreeable or painful.

Gentlemen, that which characterizes these two kinds of pleasure and pain, the pleasures and pains which are produced in us on the one hand from the spectacle of virtue and vice, and on the other hand from our own practice of good or evil, that which characterizes, I repeat, these emotions or sensations, is that they are mingled with judgments, and these judgments are the same of which I have just spoken to you. In fact, when I perceive a reasonable and free being doing evil, the sight not only displeases me necessarily, but I also condemn, I disapprove of him who does the evil, and I disapprove of him in different degrees, according as he does greater or less evil. Then, the whole phenomenon takes the name of indigna-

tion. This word indignation represents a mixture of something sensible and something intellectual. When I am indignant, it is not a simple judgment coolly pronounced by reason. We feel that there is in the word indignation something more, that there is something sensible; but, on the other hand, this word does not alone represent a simple sensible action; we feel that there is a disapprobation implied which depends upon the intellect. It is a word which represents a complex fact—first the sensible emotion caused by the sight of vice, and then the judgment I pronounce upon him who is guilty of the vice. This is the reason that it is not a simple sensation or a simple judgment; it is something mixed, which bears a special name. It is the same with the emotions which are produced in us when we ourselves do good or evil; hence the words: *satisfaction of having done well* and *remorse*. We feel that there is something else besides a painful and sensible phenomenon in the word remorse; we feel there is a condemnation pronounced by the agent upon himself for what he has done. So that in the case of the satisfaction of having done well, there is both an emotion and judgment. A phenomenon equally complex is produced in us, and this complex phenomenon has as its elements, first the agreeable emotion produced by the spectacle

of good, and secondly the approving judgment pronounced upon the agent.

Such are the phenomena, both intellectual and sensible, which accompany the accomplishment of good. Now, gentlemen, I shall proceed to add a few other considerations which I must touch upon, so as to be as little deficient as possible in a subject in which I cannot be thorough. I am not delivering a course of lectures on morality, I am only going over rapidly the results of such a course, so as to establish them as the foundation of ethics.

It is said that ethics has for its aim the determination of the law or rule of human conduct. We seek a law, and we have reason to seek it; we are not seeking counsels, indications, tokens, which we can follow or not, but a law. If it was not a law it would no longer be a science; for there exists in the human mind the idea that there are laws for every reasonable and free being, and by laws we mean precepts which we *can* follow or not, but which at the same time we *ought* to follow. Evidently, we can only seek for the law of human conduct in its relations with the end of man—that is to say, in what is called good. But good is conceived in different degrees. We call different objects of our inclinations *good;* later, we call that toward which our selfishness impels us, *good;*

finally, we conceive what I have called absolute good, good in itself, that which is good independently of all relation with ourselves, and which can create a law. There is nothing in the world more simple. What is the distinguishing characteristic of law? It is to bind; a law which does not bind is not a law. You destroy the meaning and acceptation of the word law if you take from the idea and the word law the idea of obligation.

It remains to learn which of these *goods* has the character of obligation. I have just shown you that the idea of obligation is attached only to good in itself; good in itself is, then, the only one which has the legislative character from which can emanate a law in the true acceptation of the term. There is, gentlemen, a necessary connection between the idea of good in itself and the idea of obligation; there is a necessary connection between the idea of law and the idea of obligation; two quantities equal to a third are equal to each other; the idea of good alone, then, can agree with the idea of law—that is to say, true good, absolute good, good in itself, is the only one which can create a law for human conduct. This is clearer than the light of day.

Gentlemen, it follows from this that every imaginable law deserving this name only deserves it so far as it embraces within itself, less or more,

directly or indirectly, something belonging to good, and absolute good. Every law is law only on this condition. You will say that there are throughout the world a great number of laws; for instance, the laws of procedure, which are entirely arbitrary. The human heart, human reason, does not immediately feel obliged to respect these laws for themselves; for if, in place of a delay of three days, four had been determined upon, reason would have perceived no difference; we would not feel any more bound by a delay of three than of four days; we do not feel ourselves bound by any of these delays; on this ground we can say that these laws are not laws. It is true that these laws are not laws immediately by themselves, but they become laws as soon as they are promulgated by the legitimate authority. Now, this legitimate authority, for the best of reasons, possesses the right of establishing rules. Thus there is always the idea of good behind every law truly deserving to be called law; and, far or near, directly or indirectly, we will always see in seeking for good, that the law, whatever it may be, ascends to good in itself. Good in itself binds immediately man, the individual, the citizen, to certain things toward his fellow beings. But to insure the execution of these certain things which we owe to our fellow creatures immediately in virtue of the law itself of good, there are certain

measures to be taken; to take these measures we must name judges, and choose some authority to be charged with reducing them to writing. When the end is desired, means are soon found. If we wish, as is enjoined immediately by good, that certain laws between men should be respected, which are the most sacred laws of morality, we must wish it to be provided by public authority that those men who have bad natures, wicked inclinations, should be restrained when they violate these laws. This is necessary in order to insure the respect for those laws, which are laws immediately, because they are the direct emanations of the idea of good. Consequently, we are bound, when these laws are made, to respect them, even when they seem a little absurd; for there are means to correct the absurdity, means which we ought to take, as we might otherwise incommode society and cause more harm than the arbitrary laws could do.

There is but one law in the world, the law of God; every law not derived from that is not a law, is not obligatory, is not a rule to which we are bound to submit. Thus, gentlemen, law, whatever may be its nature, whether between men or societies, is an emanation of good. The character of obligation essential to law, belonging only to the idea of good, can only be attached to that which participates in the idea of good.

Obligation is not the only character of good. It has also the characteristic of beauty. I have tried to make you comprehend it, and have tried to define it for you. Good has other characteristics; all these characteristics are those which the common sense of humanity proclaims.

Gentlemen, I have already told you that absolute good is nothing else than the end itself of universal order, or the creation, and that our particular ends are only good because they are the end of man; that thus the end of every created being is an element of the total end, which is good in itself. If this is the case, let it not be said that good, such as comes from the definition which I have given of it, and from the doctrine I explained to you, that good is something relative to man, which would be different if man were different. Distinguish well in the special end of a being what is relative from what is absolute, what is relative from what is not arbitrary. What is relative and arbitrary is that there should be such an end rather than another. Indeed, if a being was organized differently, it would have a different end, as the end is nothing else than the consequence of the nature of a being; but all these ends are not the less, in universal order, an element of that order. It is on this ground, as soon as it is comprehended, that the end of a being becomes obligatory in the eyes of this

being, that in his thoughts it takes all the peculiar characteristics of absolute good, that is, the non-arbitrary, the objective.

Gentlemen, in the end established by God, an end utterly unknown to our intellect, in creating this vast universe, the beginning, limits, almost the whole of which we are ignorant—in this end who can imagine that there is anything arbitrary? Is it possible not to conceive that this end established by God for his works is the consequence of the nature of God: that it is nothing else than the expression of this nature, that it is God himself; for what other end could he establish than himself? Now, the nature of God is the nature of the only necessary existing being. There can be then nothing arbitrary in the end proposed by God in the creation of the universe.

This end is unknown to us, and we cannot even conjecture what it may be. The order in which the whole of nature advances toward this end by the multitude of phenomena and beings who produce it, this order escapes us; but what there is certain for our reason, is that this end is a good end, and that it has nothing arbitrary about it. It is then a characteristic of good in itself, to be necessary, immutable, eternal, like the nature itself of God. If this is the case, all the elements which go to produce this definite result are not less neces-

sary than the result itself; and although we can easily imagine that instead of being a man we could be an entirely different being, it does not follow that the end of each being is an arbitrary thing, and it is on this account that he acts. The end of no being is an arbitrary thing; for the end of every being contributes to the end of God, and is an indispensable part in universal order.

Consequently we ought not to say that good is a thing which might be different: good cannot be different from what it is. If this is true of good as good, it is true of moral good for a stronger reason; for it is evident that, whatever may be our end, this end being an element of the total end, it is our duty to pursue it. There is nothing more nor less in this obligation; there is nothing arbitrary in it; our end might be different; but our obligation would remain the same; it is one, immutable, identical for all possible intelligent and reasonable beings. It is then one of the characteristics of good, of good in itself, and of all the elements of this good, not to be contingent, not to be arbitrary, to be connected with the immutability and the eternity of the end of all things, which is the nature itself of God. Another characteristic of good is that it is preëminently impersonal. When I pursue my good as estimated by selfishness, I pursue it as my own; my aim is personal

and my motive also; consequently I obey something personal, I proceed toward something personal. All is personal—aim and motive—whether in the selfish or instinctive sphere. But when I proceed toward my end because I conceive it good in itself, then the object I pursue is not mine. It is true that, being free and intelligent, I am charged especially with realizing this part of order, but I pursue and realize this part of order so far as it is a part of order—so far as it is good in itself and independent of me. My motive is impersonal; if I should lose my intelligence and liberty, I would no longer comprehend this end nor the nature of this end toward which I feel myself obliged, being intelligent, to proceed; but it would be none the less what it is, that is an element of absolute good; and that which could realize it would proceed to an impersonal end without suspecting it. My end being therefore such as ought to be pursued only because it forms part of good in itself, when I obey the moral motive I obey an impersonal motive and I proceed toward an end which is likewise impersonal; Thus the characteristic of good is impersonality as well as immutability and absoluteness. Gentlemen, these characteristics which I have merely pointed out, are characteristics known to the whole world. The true law is not made for a certain individual, and the interests of a certain

individual; the law is preëminently impersonal, it is superior to the individuals subject to it; otherwise we could not conceive it as being obligatory. The rule which we propose in order to reach an end, that our interest counsels us to pursue, has not the character of a law; it is entirely personal, it does not bind; obligation is connected only with a precept, a rule, the idea of an impersonal good. Impersonality is just as inherent in law as obligation, and for this reason, where there is obligation there is impersonality, and where there is impersonality there is obligation. These two characteristics are inseparable. Law should not be arbitrary, that is, capricious: it ought to express not what is relatively suitable to such and such an individual or such and such a case, but what is suitable in itself and to the nature of things. Such is the character of the true law. If anything arbitrary slips into a human law, it ought to appear only in a law of application, and not in a fundamental law; for we must distinguish carefully in all legislation, the part which is general, the object, the rule, from the executive part which concerns the practice, that is, the means of reaching the end, of realizing the rule. This last part is always more or less arbitrary; for although we endeavor to deduce the practice from the principle, it cannot be deduced so strictly as to

prevent some things from slipping in, the absolute necessity of which is not evident; as we cannot determine precisely all the cases, we choose an ordinance embracing the largest number of them. Thus, to return to the Code of Procedure, it appears to be arbitrary. When, however, we seek the motive of its rules, we see that they have been calculated in order to guaranty in the surest way the respect for the great principles of our legislation.

You see how all that we said of good, and all the characteristics found in it, harmonize with the characteristics which common sense attributes to law; confirming the fact that good is the only law and that all the others emanate necessarily from it. Another thing which I have dwelt upon very often, and which I would like to develop with a great deal of detail if I had the time, is the harmony, so many times noticed in these lectures, of the different motives and the different aims of human conduct. The reason for which the end of instinct, the end of selfishness and the moral end coincide, has not been given, although almost all philosophers agree in recognizing the harmony of these three ends. This has arisen from the fact that a precise and completely true idea of what is represented by the word good has not been formed. From the moment that we comprehend that the good of a being is his end, we comprehend perfect-

ly how and why instinct in this being must from the very first impel him toward his end; how selfishness, which is only a rational instinct, must impel him for a still stronger reason; and how consequently there is and there must be a coincidence between the instinctive, the selfish and the moral good. But when, instead of conceiving good as an end—absolute good as the end of creation, the good of each individual as the end of his nature—an idea approaching to or deviating from this more or less is formed, we cannot see distinctly the reason of the instinctive, the selfish and the moral motives. A being being given, as the nature of this being, and the end for which it was created, result from the being, we comprehend immediately that if this nature is called to live and to develop itself, although there is a considerable interval between its impetuous movement and the movement of reason, it begins to aspire from the commencement, blindly of course, to that for which it was created: this blind aspiration of a nature toward the end for which it was created, is instinct. If you now introduce into this nature the faculty of comprehension, this faculty, seeking to find out toward what all these instincts proceed, finding that the being is agreeably affected when its instincts attain their aim, and disagreeably when they do not, it commences to form a general idea

of the end toward which the instincts tend; this is selfish good. You see that, as there can be nothing in the result of this inquiry except what has been furnished by instinct, the result of this inquiry must point out, as the end and as good, that toward which these instincts advance blindly. So that you see personal good is nothing else than instinctive good comprehended. Now, instinctive good being only the true good of our nature, toward which it blindly aspires, you see that there must be a relation between the two, one of which is good comprehended by reason: for reason discovers nothing more than that toward which instinct impels us, and is precisely that for which our nature was made. You also find that our end is an element of the absolute end, of absolute good. Reason tells us not only that instinct impels us in fact toward this end, not only that empirical reason impels us toward it by calculation; but that we ought to advance toward it; for this end, which is personal to us, has one side absolute, one side by which it appears to us an element of what is good in itself; we ought therefore to proceed toward it because it is our end, and because our end is an element of the absolute end. You perceive the reason of the coincidence of all these ends—of all these motives. It is not only important to establish this coincidence, as all philosophic minds have

done, but to explain it, as this puts an end to the exaggerations into which people have fallen, against passion on the one hand, against selfishness and personal interest on the other. The difficulty of all moralists who have not comprehended this harmony, has been to reconcile the judgments of common sense upon passion and interest with the consequences of their systems. Indeed, not taking an account of the reasons of this coincidence, they were obliged to declare one of these ends good and to condemn the others. They condemned absolutely both the passionate and selfish ends, that is, the end toward which both our instincts and selfishness impel us. Yet common sense does not condemn in the least the pursuit of the personal end; it condemns it so little, that it condemns men who act imprudently, who imprudently sacrifice their own happiness, who take no care—in a word, prodigals, the rash. There are a great many vices which, in the eyes of common sense, have imprudence as their principle, that is, an absence of selfishness, of interest well understood. Common sense condemns all this; yet moralists, in virtue of their systems, are obliged to condemn all inquiry into personal good. There is, however, a branch of morality, which is the investigation itself of personal interest; only there is no morality in the conduct which proceeds to a personal end, so long

as it proceeds toward it in view of the person only. In order that there should be morality in this conduct, the relation of personal and absolute good must be understood—that is, the intrinsic goodness of personal good, independently of the person, must be comprehended. There is a difference in the motives, but the views are the same.

Such are some of the accessory points about which I am very glad to have spoken, as I neglected them somewhat while taken up chiefly with the determination of the true notion of good. Now I can in a very few words, and in a very rapid way, speak again of the series of conceptions which lead to the notion of good, such as I understand it. There is a great difference between the order in which these different conceptions appear to us and the order in which we are obliged to arrange them when we wish to place first that which is first logically and to place second that which is second logically, and so forth. In a word, there is a great difference between the order of the appearance of these different conceptions and the order in which they should be logically arranged in order to form a system. I will go over them rapidly in the logical order—that is, in the synthetical order.

The fundamental conception, speaking logically, which perhaps appears to us last in the psychological order, is the conception that everything has

an end, and that consequently the whole creation has an end. That this end is good in itself—that is to say, is the good in itself—is an idea inseparable from the end. As soon as we conceive that everything has an end, we conceive that this end is the good itself. When we seek to account for this end, we also conceive, as I said a little while ago, that it can only be the consequence itself of the necessary, immutable nature of God; for God cannot proceed to an end contradictory to his nature; he can have no other end than himself, and therefore all that can be said of the nature of God can be said of the end established by him in his works. In a word, necessity, immutability, absence of everything arbitrary, can be spoken of in regard to good in itself, which is the end of all things and God himself.

We also conceive that the law by which all that exists and will exist in the creation, tends to the end established by God, constitutes universal order, and that this order participates in all the characteristics of the end of God; that is to say, if the end is good, order is good; if the end is eternal and immutable, order is eternal and immutable; there is nothing arbitrary in it, any more than in the nature of God.

By the side of these two conceptions another is immediately produced; it is, that the whole having an end, all the parts of the whole contribute to this

end, and that the ends of each of these parts are only an element, of which the total end ought to be the resultant. If this is the case, the character of absolute goodness belonging to the end of God ought to be extended to each of the particular ends and to each of the particular orders of which this absolute end and order are only resultants, which makes these ends sacred.

A fourth conception is that each nature has been adapted to its end, and that the end of a nature is nothing else than the consequence of the organization itself of the nature. This idea is always necessary for our reason; it is very important in science, because it discovers the means of determining scientifically the end of every being whose nature can be known to us. These absolute, universal conceptions, which embrace the whole, lead (when we observe things or the portion of things we can see and know) to two classes—first, to beings who are intelligent and free; and secondly, to beings which are neither intelligent nor free. A being which is not intelligent appears to us as not being able to comprehend its end, and as not having the power or the choice to proceed or not to proceed toward its end; it appears to us, then, as not being charged by the Creator with the accomplishment of its end, and as not being responsible for its accomplishment; it appears to us also as

deserving no praise in proceeding toward its end, and as not being able to deserve any praise. Such, gentlemen, are the characteristics of those kinds of beings called by us *things*, which we distinguish from that other class of beings called by us *persons*. The free beings, on the other hand, being free, can advance or not to their end; being intelligent, they can accomplish it. They appear to us, consequently, as if charged to realize in themselves their end, and in this way they appear to us as an element of absolute good, as if responsible for the accomplishment of this end, as if deserving of praise when they reach it and deserving blame when they do not.

It cannot be said that the liberty accorded to these beings is absolute; by the wisdom of God it has been inclosed, so to speak, as observation assures us, within certain limits, which leave considerable play to liberty, but not enough to disturb the immutable designs of Providence. Gentlemen, when we study man, who is for us the type of the intelligent and free beings, we notice what amazing precautions have been taken by the Creator to prevent the free being from deviating too much from the road of his destiny. In fact, there is not a motive in him which does not impel him toward his end. Propensity or instinct impels him toward it; selfishness leads him; the moral motive enjoins

him to advance. It is very difficult for him, being subject to motives all of which impel him toward this end, not to advance or to go much out of the way. The most important thing that human liberty can do in the pursuit of the end, is to advance toward it as the end, or advance toward it by other motives; but whether human liberty advances because it is the end, the good, or advances from instinct, from personal interest, it advances toward this end continually; it is not given to a human creature to advance more or less toward the end for which he has been created. Man is chained to the pursuit of his end by all the bonds of passion, selfishness and morality. We do not discover in ourselves a single motive which tends to make us deviate from this end; and on the other hand, when we go astray in the pursuit of our true end through our liberty, we are called back incessantly by all the punishments which the eternal order of things, in the midst of which we are called to develop ourselves, inflicts upon him who deviates from his path to enter into one not his. The true way of suffering is to leave the road of one's destiny; immediate punishments, which spring from the order of things, fall upon every man who deviates from this road, and in proportion as he deviates more or less. It is this, gentlemen, which makes it difficult for a man to deviate much from his end, and this is the reason

that I have always maintained, and always will maintain, that the man who has the least accomplished his end has still accomplished it to a very great degree; that the greatest criminal, the most immoral man, has exercised to a certain degree—to a pretty high degree—his human personality, and that in quitting this life, however badly he may have passed it, he is entirely different from what he was when he entered it, he is a creature resembling God, even with the crimes he has committed. He has deliberated, he has chosen, he has been deceived, but he has exercised his high faculties; he was a thing, he has become a person; he has created himself. Life is useless to no one, it is useful to every human creature. We must judge men with very great charity, as God himself does, who sees the human weaknesses and at the same time sees the end toward which all advance.

Such are the two classes we can distinguish: the beings which are not free, which advance fatally toward their end, and the beings to whom it is given to reach theirs with intelligence and liberty. The latter become persons, the first remain things.

We call the accomplishment of their end by free and intelligent beings moral good, and the non-accomplishment of their end moral evil, while the words *order* and *disorder* are reserved to designate the accomplishment of their end by beings which

have neither liberty nor intelligence. You will immediately understand that disorder in beings which advance fatally toward their end is not possible. Also, when it is created in this world, it is always by a cause foreign to the nature of the being.

I should have noticed, as I think I have done in some of my lectures, that man causes much disorder in this world, but I shall demonstrate a little later that he has the right to do so. Again, we must notice that the order in this world (which must not be taken for absolute order, but as a link in the chain of existences which fill space and will fill it in future) is such that no destiny can be completely accomplished here, that all destinies limit each other. Evil in this world is only the imperfection of good. Now, there is an order of things which is peculiar to this world, and which, among a thousand other indications, testifies that the world is only a point in the creation, only a transitory world, not containing the ideal of absolute and perfect order.

There is, gentlemen, a multitude of mysteries in the moral conceptions. The absolute good, or the definitive end of all things, or the thought of God in the creation, escapes us completely. And, in fact, space is infinite; the creation fills space; we are but a feeble point of created things, we can

therefore have no idea of the whole, and we must have an idea of the whole to rise to the idea of the end. Again, time is infinite, and in the bosom of this infinite time a succession of worlds and creations must flow on indefinitely. Now, we are but a point, a small point, in duration; we cannot then comprehend the creation under the relation of duration any more than under the relation of space. This is the reason that the absolute end of things or absolute good escapes us; but we have the idea that there is an end, and the certainty that it is good, although we do not know in what this end consists, and consequently in what good consists. This end exists, it is good, this is what we are certain of; and as we are certain secondly that nothing in this world can be foreign to this end, and that every particular end, whatever it may be, is an element of this absolute end, we are called to respect, as an element of absolute good, every particular end that we know; and our duty is limited to this; it is limited, as I have said, to respect the elements of good known to us, no matter how few they may be; even when we comprehend nothing of absolute good, we are sure that this absolute good exists, and that the particular ends known to us are the elements of this absolute good, so that for us they bear all the characteristics of absolute good, as if we knew it.

Such is the true position in which we are. The creation escapes us, and consequently its end. When a thought of the creation comes to us, and consequently a portion of the ends of creation, these ends are sacred for us, we ought to respect them.

This, gentlemen, is all that is mysterious in the moral conceptions, or in the conceptions which rise to the moral conception. In descending from the universal creation (embracing the whole creation and God himself) to the order of this world, to the order of man, we often discover things that are clearer than the light of day. Man conceives that he has an end; he knows that he is free and intelligent; he feels that he is charged with fulfilling this end for which he is responsible; he feels that he deserves praise if the accomplishment takes place through him, or deserving of blame if it does not take place. But he finds very soon that it is impossible for him to attain his end completely, that everything has been so arranged in this world that he cannot attain to all truth conceived by his intelligence and for which he was created, nor to that universal union with everything existing—with everything like ourselves (which is one of the ends of our nature), nor to any of the other ends for which our nature was created. From which it is

clear to him that it is not the design of God in the present creation that man should reach his absolute end, such as results from his nature. There is one good, however, in this world, completely in the power of man, no matter in what way he may have been educated, or in what situation he may be placed. This good is moral good, consisting, in each circumstance, in attaining one's destiny as far as possible and as far as it is comprehended. Moreover, it is evident to man that in seeking this moral good he becomes praiseworthy—worthy of a better destiny, that he becomes a better person, while he develops in himself all the elements of personality. Besides, it is clear to him that an order of things in which he could have accomplished the whole of his destiny without effort would not have developed in him that marvel called *the person*, which makes him like God. God is then justified in our minds in the temporary order of this world. The reason of this transitory order is given us. It is proved to us even to demonstration that moral good is our true end in the present life. Then the duties of man toward himself are ascertained, and the traditions of ethics are fixed, such being the principle. This principle is clearer than the light of day. I know of nothing more clearly demonstrated, more evident, and I

will endeavor to carry this branch of morality—personal morality—to the highest degree of scientific evidence possible.

Undoubtedly the end of free beings is an element of good in itself; but if there were no other beings, man would be bound to honor and respect the free development of all things surrounding him—trees, plants, animals—absolutely as he is bound to respect the free development of his fellow creatures. Two circumstances, however, strike us in looking at things; the first is, that things being neither free nor intelligent, are not at all charged with or responsible for the accomplishment of their destiny; they are merely instruments in the hands of God. In the first place, there is, then, no injustice in violating the order of these things. In the second place (and this is of great importance) there is a conflict in the organization and arrangement of this world—a perpetual conflict between the order of things and the order of man. Now, bound and obliged as I am by my organization to accomplish my order, I find myself in presence of beings that are not charged with the accomplishment of their order or end, that are not bound to it, that are but an instrument in the hands of God. If there is a conflict between these two orders, if one can only be realized on the condition that the other be destroyed, modified or altered, I, who am charged

with the accomplishment of my order, I, who find myself in presence of creatures not responsible—simple instruments in the hands of God—I have all the rights of this world. If God had determined that the ends of those things should be accomplished strictly, he would have arranged the creation in such a manner that this order would have been as sacred to me as the order of my fellow beings, or as inaccessible as the planets. Providence would have provided for it, if He had not willed that we should violate their order for the profit of our own. It is therefore proved to me that I can make use of things and turn them from their destiny for the accomplishment of my own. It is for this reason that I kill animals, that I cut short a multitude of destinies while in the act of accomplishment, that I break in, for the advancement of my own order, upon the order of the material creation surrounding me, of the blind creation surrounding me. While in presence of my fellow beings, charged like myself with the accomplishment of their destiny, this order is sacred for me; I cannot disturb it for my own advantage. Such are the foundations of the whole reason of our conduct toward others. In the light of this principle—the notion of good—I see all the principles established in advance from which are to be derived the rules of human conduct in all the

different branches of natural right and morality. It is too late to go over them again ; I suppress them entirely ; but I was necessitated to recapitulate the whole of the doctrines, in order to leave the impression with you of what will serve for a foundation for the different branches of ethics which I shall approach hereafter.

LECTURE IX.

THEORETICAL VIEWS CONTINUED.

We have now come, gentlemen, to the most difficult part of our task. We have finally reached the end toward which we have constantly advanced from the beginning of these lectures, each of which brought us nearer. The question was to determine the idea of good, and we had to choose between two ways: one more direct, which was to seek immediately for the solution of the problem; the other safer, which was to demand in the first place the solution from philosophical systems, but, if they did not give it to us, to seek it for ourselves. The latter seemed to us to be the one to be preferred; we followed it. We have, therefore, gone over all the philosophical doctrines on the question, and we have criticised them successively. At the outset we saw that they were divided into two classes: those which deny the idea of good expressly or impliedly and those which recognize it. We had first to ascertain whether the former were right; for if they were, our inquiry would have been fruit-

less, as we would have pursued the determination of a chimerical idea. We therefore devoted ourselves to an examination, and it convinced us that these doctrines could not be sustained, and that the negation of the idea of good was in them, only the consequence of error. Consoled by this doubt, we then continued our review, and, passing to the doctrines which admit the idea of good and are obliged to determine it, we demanded of them the solution of the problem. Instead of one solution they presented three to us, and it could not be otherwise; since our nature can yield to three motives and aspire to three ends of action, it was inevitable that each of these ends should be considered by some philosopher as containing in itself and representing the true idea of good. It remained for us to learn which of them contains it and represents it truthfully. In order to discover the true idea of good, we examined the three solutions and the systems which proposed and defended them. This examination led us to reject two of those solutions, the solution of the selfish systems and the solution of the instinctive systems, and to recognize the fact that the idea of good cannot be solved either in the greatest satisfaction of our tendencies as the first maintain, or in the particular object of the good of these tendencies as the second maintain. It follows, then, that this idea can only be met with in

the third end in view of which we can act—an end avowed by reason which it calls good, and toward which we are carried not by prudence or desire, but by obligation. This is recognized with common accord by all the rational systems, and we recognize it also. But it is not enough to establish the fact that the good conceived by reason, being the only one which is absolutely conceived and which obliges us, is for that reason the only one which satisfies the condition of the problem; we must go still further and determine in what this good consists.

The rational systems understood this difficulty; we have seen them in harmony in regard to the end, but divided in regard to the idea which should be formed of it. Some maintain that the idea of good is irreducible and cannot be defined; others maintain that it can be resolved into a clearer idea. In seeking this idea, it was necessary to follow the rational doctrines in this important debate, which we have done. Examining, with Price and the Scotch school, the idea that good is indeterminable, we have seen that the idea is inadmissible, if it is true that good is an end distinct from actions, and in relation to which we judge them good or bad; for if Price's doctrine was true, we could not pronounce this judgment. This doctrine draws after it necessarily the negation of good as an external

end and the affirmation that it is only a simple quality of actions perceived immediately in them, like color and form in bodies: an opinion which all those who maintained that good is indefinable have really professed, but which it is impossible to admit, for it confounds two distinct things—moral good and good in itself, and cannot be reconciled with the deliberations of the conscience, the discussion which morality excites, and the progressive march which it has followed in its developments. The doctrine which denies that good can be defined being thus condemned with that class of rational systems maintaining it, it only remained for us to ask the definition of those who have believed that it could be found, and who sought for it. We have, therefore, questioned several of those systems, and examined the ideas by which they attempted to translate the idea of good. None satisfied us, because none seemed to us to satisfy the double condition which such an idea ought to fulfill, of being recognized by the common conscience as that which it sees confusedly under the word *good*, and of coinciding in such a way with the idea represented by this word, that it comprehends neither more nor less, and that we can substitute imperceptibly one for the other in all possible applications. Kant's theory, which substitutes for the distinction of good a sign by the means of

which we can recognize it, appears to us to be only an ingenious way of escaping the difficulty without solving it.

Such, gentlemen, is the road we have passed over, and such are the results given us by the history of philosophy strictly questioned. These results are considerable, although not containing the definition we are seeking. A great number of truths, that we were ignorant of, are now perfectly known and proved. We know that none of the philosophical systems which imply the negation of the idea of good has a foundation, and we are, therefore, reassured of the reality of this idea made obscure and doubtful by these systems. And as to the determination itself of this idea, the review we have made of the systems that have attempted it, revealed to us all the mistakes, all the confusion into which the human mind can fall while in the pursuit. True good can be confounded either with the particular end of some instinct, or with the more general but wholly personal end of interest well understood. We have met with great systems which have fallen into this double error, we have examined them thoroughly, and we know that neither the good of the instinct, nor the good of selfishness is good in itself. Again, this true good can be confounded with moral good, that is, with the good in acts, which is but the realization of it;

we have also found upon our path doctrines which erected this confusion into a system, and we have proved its insufficiency and error. Owing to this confusion, it was supposed and maintained that good is indefinable. Philosophers were found to represent this error, and we refuted them. Without denying that good is definable, it was denied that it was useful to define it, and it was enough, in order to recognize it, to know the sign of the obligation inseparably attached to it; we combated that definition in Kant, which may be given, but which does not at all satisfy the human mind. Finally, gentlemen, besides the doctrines which deny good, besides those which seek it where it cannot be found; besides those which not seeking it where it is, maintain either that it cannot be defined or that it is superfluous to attempt it, we can, while seeking it where it is or in attempting to define it, resolve it into ideas which have an apparent identity with it, but which are, nevertheless, not the true ideas. These ideas have been given us by history in the succession of systems, the different mistakes of which we have shown you, and we know that they do not contain the definition we are seeking. We have thus arrived by the road of history as near as possible to the solution of the great problem we proposed at the beginning. All possible errors are removed, the true

difficulty is established, defined, circumscribed; we know precisely on what conditions we can discover the solution, and by what signs we will be able to recognize it. It only remains for us to attack and vanquish the difficulty if possible. Such, gentlemen, is what we have done and to what we have been led. It was necessary, before quitting the historical and entering the dogmatical part, to review once more the road already passed over. You will pardon these frequent returns to the past at each new step we take; insupportable in a book, they are indispensable in a course of lectures given orally, at long intervals, and leaving fugitive impressions in the mind. This shall be the last. We now stand in presence of the problem, we shall proceed to its solution. The historian disappears, the philosopher succeeds. Be kind enough to accord to the latter the indulgence and attention never refused to the former.

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